Cosmiad,
Sonnets
and Rhymes

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The Cosmiad, Sonnets and Rhymes.

By Francis Mansfield,

AUTHOR OF
GATHERED WAIFS and NEW MUSIC.

LONDON AND NEW YORK
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PREFACE TO THE COSMIAD SONNETS AND RHYMES.

Better than all the world's great books are those rare Odysseys which fill the mind with exquisite delight in the wild dreams of passion's sleepless nights, or those immortal Iliads living and breathing in the frenzied mind; when the wounded soldier leans upon his musket on the battlefield, while he listens to the music of the bullets as they whistle by; nay sweeter than any Ode from Horace is that pastoral lay each shepherd hears with throbbing heart when in the silence of the wood he listens to the murmur of the forest leaves, or gurgling of the brook as it flows along, while he is seeking his stray sheep, reclaiming his lost lambs and restoring them again to the glad fold. There sits the true bard in meditation on his plough-beam while resting in the corner of the field, or holding his axe-helve after chopping down the tree, or resting his hand on the spade near the upturned furrow; there the bright swain recites his lyric while the robins twitter on the boughs above his head; and he becomes an author of some fifty excellent books which remain still unwritten, except upon the tablets of his brain; but just as soon as these verses of inspired song are transferred to the written page or in cold type are stamped upon the leaves of a book, at once they lose their peculiar charm and begin to lack their refreshing lustre; the words become cold and dead under the printing-press; and nothing of their sweetness re-

mains after their life is gone. The most that the author can do for you, gentle reader, is to furnish the outline; your own imagination must fill up the picture with its proper lights and shadows; however graceful the measure may be, your own intuition alone can supply the melody. It is your part to clothe this skeleton with flesh and breathe in life that this clod made of clay, may like our ancient progenitor by the power of a quickening inspiration become a living soul.

> Bid fancy hew a mask from each rough oak,
> A Phidian statue from each marble block.

EARLY CHRISTMAS MORNING.

Light of the ages, this dark world illume,
Rise o'er the shadows, scatter earth's dread gloom,
Cast thy fair beams upon the dismal night,
Bid morning break upon our ravished sight.

So long we feel these halos hovering round,
The chilly dampness of the dewy ground,
That fain would we behold the sun's clear ray
Transforming midnight into joyous day.

See toward the east the morning star arise,
While streams of glory overspread the skies;
Swift flee away the chariot wheels of night,
While upward rolls the circling orb of light.

It is the smile upon our Father's face
That lights the worlds throughout the realm of space,
That scatters gloom and darkness from the earth,
And thrills the heart of man with gladsome mirth.

Thou Son of righteousness of Mary born,
Shed o'er our souls the beauteous rays of morn;
Thy children here, expectant girls and boys,
Await thy beams to crown their Christmas joys.

TENDER REMEMBRANCES TOO REAL TO BE A DREAM.

What ecstacy to hear from Eden's land
The whispered breathings through each oaken bough
To feel the touch of Ina's vanished hand
Pressed lightly on the margin of this brow.

While beauty dwelt within her silent tear,
And maiden blushes decked her brows above;
Her voice was music to my ravished ear
Her words were wafted on the breath of love.

She had a name which charmed me with its spell,
A form that hovered o'er me in mid-air;
Her's was a song that I remember well
Which echoed through the welkin every where.

There was a smile which welcomed my return
And sweetened life in times of bitter smart.
Some frenzied impulse makes my spirit yearn,
To kiss the tender hand that ruled my heart.

No king could offer me so rich a prize
Whose splendors dazzle in the world's eclipse
Could I once gaze into those wondrous eyes
And taste the honey on those rosy lips.

I want that presence in my darkened way
I need it now to cheer my pensive mood,
That face, the sun which changed the night to day
And chased the gloom from Earth's grim solitude.

Beneath this canopy, this vaulted sky
Which spans the orient far as ancient Troy
No earthly paragon need ever try
To turn my wintry grief to summer's joy.

Blest was the hour that gave her sovereign sway
To rule with gentle sceptre this poor heart
And never shall I cease to curse the day
That dreaded day which tore our souls apart.

Heaven pardon to my cheeks these tears of brine
'Tis dreary thus to dwell on earth alone
By fate's decree when she was wholly mine
Alas death wooed and won her for his own.

How longs my soul for one brief hour of bliss
One moment even while on bended knee
I pledge my vow and steal her honeyed kiss
And summon her sweet spirit back to me.

Cheer up brave soul, for when fond hearts are breaking
Life's cup of sorrow full and brimming o'er
Sweet hope dispels the shadows death is making
Soft light comes streaming from some neighboring shore.

Soon in the shaded vale where dwell in peace
Those millions shrouded on their mother's breast
Secluded from all sorrow we shall cease
Wrapped in earth's mantle of eternal rest.
There'll be a time when there will be a land
Where earth's lost wandering tribes will reach
their home.

THE FIRST CHRISTMAS.

The shepherds watched their flocks by night
While angels trod the starlit way.
Then Jesus saw the crimson light
Which dawned upon His natal day.

LIFE'S EVENTIDE.

Hark! 'tis the music of the spheres
'Tis nature's sweetest song
The voice of woodland greets our ears
Where thunderings belong.
Man, weep no more.

Look how the evening shadow lowers
With clouds of silver gray
The messengers that presage showers
Now shut the doors of day.
Man, sleep no more.

The vapor spread beneath the skies
Moulds the arid fields anew;
The earth which weeps when daylight dies
Drinks in the honeyed dew.
Man's heart is sore.

Along the murky shades of night
Grim spectres float in air;
Sprites in the dark elude our sight
But mortals feel them there.
Grave souls deplore.

The weary world will sink to rest
Beneath this placid dome,
While dreams will calm each troubled breast
With silent thoughts of home.
On Chebar's shore.

THE TWO VOYAGES.

(1) THE VOYAGE OF LIFE.

Long since we started with a trembling motion,
Guiding the galley round our island's lee,
To search our pathway through a trackless ocean,
And test our manhood on this unknown sea.

So hard we struggled with no chart to guide us,
By hidden rocks where shipwrecks strew the main;
So firm we stood when those wild waves defied us,
So sturdy fought against rough wind and rain,

That oft from out our course we drifted far,
We grasped the helm within our firm control,
We sharply watched the seaman's guiding star,
We steered our craft by Danger's rocky shoal.

Time and the sea have each their narrow boundings,
Sail on, brave ship, convey thy treasures o'er;
The plummet lead can reach deep ocean's soundings,
Take courage, souls, float on toward yonder shore.

Our ship grows old with timbers harshly creaking,
The mists of age close round departing day;
The storm-clouds gather o'er the port we're seeking,
Down with the life boat, boys, pull hard away.

The vessel all ablaze on rocks is sinking,
O pity those lost souls wrecked on that strand;
Heroes escape, while cowards all go slinking,
And bold, brave seamen safely reach the land.

When roll the waves of this world's bitter sorrow
Around our storm-tossed bark which mounts on high;
From out the depths of darkness, we may borrow
Hope's comfort voiced above that grim grey sky.

(2) THE VOYAGE OF DEATH.

In ancient days of legend and of story,
When wizard, ghost and fairy used to dwell,
Among the mountain caverns, bleak and hoary,
Strange mysteries could those old witches tell.

A maiden lay upon the beach adreaming,
Her father's hut stood on the hill near by,
Rays from the setting sun were softly streaming,
Through yonder pines whose shadows reached the sky.

The mermaids crowded round her vast in number,
To watch her pillowed on that oaken slab;
While Elsie cradled in the arms of slumber,
Saw visions brilliant as the hills of Mab.

The tide flowed in; down rolled the sweeping billow,
Leaping all barriers far past the shelving line;
The waters swelled beyond her oaken pillow,
And bore the sleeping beauty through the brine.

The mermaids caught her up by Heaven's decree,
And gave her escort in true martial style;
Through many a league, her sisters of the sea,
Bore her away to their enchanted isle.

When waves of death around our souls flow sweeping,
Bearing his victims through dark seas of blood,
When mourners downcast on the shore stand weeping.
Kind spirits bear us o'er the deep, cold flood.

Their wings like oars above the waves are beating,
With controversial stroke against the air;
Some voice salutes us with a kindly greeting,
Some hand still guides us with a father's care.

While we sail homeward through the twilight gloaming,
Day's weary eyelids droop with darkness veiled;
By sure approaches we shall rest from roaming,
Welcomed by comrades and by brothers hailed.

THE LAND OF THE MORNING.

Bold seamen pace o'er the storm-beaten deck,
Staunch vessels shake in the billows' wild foam;
Mariners' hearts in the tragical wreck,
Cast a fond wish towards their boyhood's dear home.

Just in the spring of life, passing the shadows,
Down by the streamlets where swift waters flow;
Breathing the fragrance which floats o'er the meadows,
Gladly we stroll where the soft breezes blow.

Often for love or for sympathy pining,
Lost in the whirl of this giddy carouse;
Busy in thoughtfulness stay we reclining,
On the smooth river-bank 'neath the green boughs.

Mist and cloud hover, where rude winds are sighing,
Round the rough hill-tops, among the tall pines,
Darkness spreads over us, daylight is dying;
Wreath of the sombre night round earth entwines.

Through the bright, vernal day we may go plodding,
Cheery at noontide, but weary at eve;
Stars after nightfall now watch us a-nodding,
Guarded in slumber, the spirit's reprieve.

Night comes apace in the crash of life's bubble,
Darkness reveals to us heaven's shining goal;
Oh, may we resting from earth's toil and trouble,
Flee to those gates where dwells peace to the soul.

Land of the morning. The noontide's red glare,
Shines through the tree-tops in tropical bloom;
Twilight enfolds us in radiant air,
Night never starless enshrouds not with its gloom.

VISIONS OF HOPE.

There'll be a time when earth's wild roving tribes
That pitch their tents here under heaven's high dome
Will reach some land that's free from taunts and gibes
Some shore that welcomes every pilgrim home.
O tell me shall that realm be ours at last
Beyond the starry host that lines the sky,
Celestial cities of the aged past
Where dwell the martyred sires who never die?
The prayer most prevalent with heavenly powers
Which knocks full gently at the gates on high
Will gain sure entrance to those splendid towers
Where man's chief hope and choicest treasures lie.
Take heart, my soul, life's transient dream when o'er
Will bring thee greeting from a brighter shore.
Go make thy deeds a sermon that shall give
The model teaching how the world should live.

When the day of grace is dying,
While the swift-winged hours are flying,
To our task our souls applying,
Let us watch, not wait, but work.

WHEN JOHNNY COMES HOME FROM THE WAR.

A Song by Ivan.

Hey day hey, There is no use of weeping,
Or nightly vigils keeping;
For jolly tars,
Bring sons of Mars;
My Johnnie has come home,
Upon the wild sea foam.
Hey day hey.

Heigh ho heigh, My heart can not be bleeding,
Nor tongue to God be pleading
For soldiers come
With fife and drum,
My buxom boy is here
Which fills my soul with cheer.
Heigh ho heigh.

ON THE BONNIE BLUE WAVES.

On the bonnie blue waves of the ocean,
Where the rolling of waters is heard;
There's a thrilling delight in the motion,
When the galley flies swift as a bird.
There's a joy in the heart of the seaman,
While he warbles the mariner's lay;
When he sails o'er the flood of Lake Leman,
Or weighs anchor in a frith of Cathay.
He can dance, he can sing and be merry,
On the quarter-deck rolicking free;
While the jolly tars whisk round the wherry,
Just as nimble as nymphs of the sea.
When the shrouds of the pinnace are creaking,
In the swell of the frolicksome gale;
While the reef-lines still drip with the reeking,
As it sprays from the foam on the sail;
Lo, the sea-boy stands brave as a hero,
At the helm with his masterly grip;
And with courage more stern than of Nero,
He controls his own wind-driven ship.

BOABDIL OF ALMA.

THE DEVASTATED CITY.

Eccl. 9:14.

Three thousand years ago, the city lay,
Together clustered on a group of hills,
Where palaces of beauty, rich and gay
Stood on the verdant banks of placid rills;
Embowered all in rows of lofty trees,
Which lined the winding streets on either side,
Whose branches swayed aloft with every breeze,
Like billows on the ocean's rolling tide.

It seemed an ancient, venerable town,
Supplied with monuments and moss-grown towers,
High mounted battlements which grimly frown,
In foreign wars with military powers.
In former years, this city proudly stood,
Immense in wealth, a vast metropolis
Secured commercial gains, treasures of wood,
Gold, silver, gems, which crowned their civic bliss.

The citizens possessed a boundless store;
Intelligence and culture, wisdom, wit
And learning flourished in the days of yore,
And arts and trades, which for those times were fit.

That splendid city nameless once had grown;
Ages had blotted from the human mind
The memory of the spot, which then was shown
To travellers, who since no trace could find.

In Holy Writ the town is justly named,
E'en celebrated as the ancient site,
Of battles fought, and contests widely famed,—
Historic in its record and its might.
It is no fiction of the poet's brain,
No creature of his playful fancy, wrought
In dreams of his imagination, wild and vain,
No picture conjured by his tragic thought.

But castled villas there in truth were built,
And walls of stone surrounded that fair site,
There domes, and splendid temples crowned with gilt
Resplendant shone, and glittered in the light.
Some warlike nation envied this small town,
And threatened to destroy the modest place;
One slight offence provoked their angry frown,
They hastened down to crush it in disgrace.

Fierce were those warriors, hardy, brave and strong,
Barbaric in their temper and their wills;
Impregnable their fortresses, the rocks among,
Thus firm their ramparts stood on terraced hills.
Clad in their coats of armor, strongly steeled,
With Bresset, crested casque with lofty plume,

They wore greave, brassart, vambrace, corselet nealed
In Vulcan's furnace, chilled in Lethe's flume.

With brawny arm and brazen strength they fight,
Wonted to conquer as confront their foe,
With sword, spear, helmet marshalled in their might,
With death's destruction in the darts they throw.
Full fifty years passed by while Vengeance slept
Within the closure of Boabdil's breast,
For legends tell us how his warriors kept
Their spell-bound vigils during watchful rest.

Like Sagitarius with the archer's bow,
They staid inthralled in posture of suspense,
Till waked from slumber, summoned forth, they go
To stand or fall in Alma's brave defense.
While these still halted lingering as they dreamed,
Thrice came some bravo to their squadron's cave;
Half-sleeping and half-waking still they seemed,
But looked like basilisks to that sly knave.

Boabdil stared and eyed the villain's face,
Then asked he, "Is it time yet?" "Nay," answered he;
The bandit trembling fled with hurried pace,
And dared no more intrusive sights to see.
King of that cavern by whose wondrous spell,
Magicians captive hold their slavish herd,
Boabdil needs but sound his magic shell,
To arms they spring attendant on his word.

One gentle stroke of his stout sceptred wand,
Could set a million warriors cheek by jowl,
One mighty empire welded by his bond,
Holds subject nations neath his firm control.
Erect they sat upon their noble steeds,
Calmly awaited mute the trumpet's blast.
Long had they yearned to show heroic deeds,
The horn's strill note aroused their blood at last.

With bristling rage and angry frown the war
Lifts her bold front outside the castled gate,
And grasps the prey with her imperious claw,
And measures strength with stern decrees of fate.
While now they grapple in the clutch of strife,
Boabdil leads his army to the field,
Bears his bold standard, reckless of his life,
Through ranks of braves, by force compelled to yield.

The shout of victory which rends the air,
Reverberates along the distant hills,
The song of triumph which the breezes bear,
Reaches the sky and all the welkin fills.
Alma is saved. No longer now shall fears
Depress her hope or blight her promised joy.
No longer doomed to pay to grief her tears,
She shall enrich her treasures till they cloy.

THE ANGRY WORD.

THOUGHTS FOR GOOD FRIDAY.

I spoke a word in anger,
  Jesus was passing by.
His face beamed full of pity,
  A tear bedimmed his eye.
"Why weepest thou, my Savior?
  Oh speak the reason why?"
"I feel too sad to tell you,"
  Was his demure reply.

Jesus beheld me weeping,
  My heart with sorrows stirred
To think He would deny me
  A single plaintive word.
His love glows true and tender,
  As oft I've gladly heard;
I crave to learn the answer
  So sadly still deferred.

The spectacle appalling,
  Alas! What do I see?
Hands, feet and side still bleeding,
  And sorely pierced by me!
I plead my quest no longer,
  Since conscience points my plea;
My sin, my sin hath nailed Him
  To death's accursed tree.

SAILOR BOY.

I'd be a sailor boy
And ride upon the waves
My heart and life all joy
For this my spirit craves
With pleasures wild and free
So would I gladly roam
Skimming the dark blue sea
With all the world my home
I love the rough mad wind
The ship's proud gallant form
My chief delights I find
In terrors of the storm
Though each heroic deed
To fame be unexpressed
Enough shall be its meed
Within the sailor's breast.
Then bid me soon depart
From this my native shore
Bear well the painful smart
Should I return no more.

THE EIGHTIETH BIRTHDAY.

Aged sire grown weak and sickly
Haste thy sands are almost run
What thou hast to do do quickly;
For thy task will soon be done.

Now the morn of youth remember
Fast hath sped through years begun
This last day of bleak December
Closeth by the setting sun.

Long before thy locks grew hoary
Thou didst gather harvest seeds;
Finish life's eventful story
By the grandest, noblest deeds.

Bravely struggle, cease repining,
Fight the battle in God's name
Strew the victories all shining
Through the galaxy of fame.

When thy life is most in earnest
Just before its solemn close
When with fiery zeal thou burnest
Dost thou dread the night's repose?

Deck the sunset sky all hoary
With vermilion stain the cloud;
Wrap the mantle of thy glory
Round thee like that twilight shroud.

Thou shalt sleep in dreamy slumber,
In thy home of peaceful rest,
When thou dwellest with that number
Who shall live forever blest.

Life now through thy body courses
Streams their channels amply fill;
Soon the fount will dry their sources
Weary heart grow faint and still.

Tottering footsteps, hands that tremble,
Stooping shoulders bent with age
Hollow cheeks and eyes resemble
Figures on thy tragic stage.

Man turns gray by care and sorrow,
Autumn leaves by frost and age,
Setting suns foretell the morrow,
Winter ends life's pilgrimage.

Time like ebbing tide resistless
Ever onward towards the goal
Moves in majesty so listless
Thou canst never hear his roll.

Men like trees may live till eighty
Battling storms of winters cold
Proving thus by reasons weighty
How they haply grow not old.

Grand is life in age advancing
Towards the silent closing scene;
Round its hopes in fancy dancing
Age is peaceful and serene.

We were fond of mirthful pleasure
Years ago when life was young
We could tread the sportive measure,
Now our lute hangs there unstrung.

Morning suns no longer beaming,
Days of feasting please no more,
Now our souls wait sweetly dreaming
Till we reach yon golden shore.

Passion ceaseth to impel us
Onward by his tidal wave,
Thousands of wise maxims tell us
Youth is gay, but age is grave.

OUR CHOICEST TREASURE.

Fain would I choose my humble lot
Mid trellised vines that deck my cot
And clustered fern.
Let modest dames stand at my gate
My own sweet child shall there await
My home-return.

More than the gilded halls of kings,
Better than treasure this earth brings,
Of wealth untold,
I prize my little cottage home,
Dearer by far than fanes of Rome,
Or mines of gold.

To me there's one bright cherished spot
My own serene enchanted grot
Where dwells a dove;
And oh, how precious to my heart
The child that forms of life a part
And claims our love.

She captivates in maiden's guise,
With wit as sparkling as her eyes
She wins the throng.
Her beauty graced with lovely charms
Attracts each gallant knight in arms
To hear her song.

Upon her brow like lilies fair
Hang auburn tresses of her hair
In ringlet curls.
Upon her cheeks of rosy hue
She gathers the fresh honey-dew
Which gladdens girls.

Let wooers come in stately ships;
Sweet as a peach her parted lips
Invite a kiss;
Impassioned lovers choose their mates
While fond affection calmly waits
To seal their bliss.

Though oft with woful cares beset,
I would not for a world forget
My childhood's friend,
But hold her image set apart
Still chambered, nestling in my heart
Till life shall end.

THE STONE WHICH FELL WITH ADAM.

On the banks of Kusar where the old prophet dreams
While the waters flow by from the clear crystal springs,
In the garden of Paradise Adam still seems
To be stunned with the message which Azrail brings.
The tradition as old as the birth of man's soul
Says his body was formed from seven colors of clod
Dug from seven depths of earth; every whit of the whole
Was kneaded by angels, then moulded by God.
Down from Paradise fell a marvellous stone
And "the right hand of God on the earth" is its name;
It will float on the water and swim all alone
In the Kabey at Mecca the land of its fame.
While it rests in the hold of its silvery shrine
Where the Moslem salutes it with reverent kiss,
Though Karmata's heretical sect may malign
It still ministers worlds to Mehometan bliss.
Though it once was as white as the first virgin snow,
Its old coat is turned black by pollution's foul stain,
But within it is spotless as Meccans still show
And its cuplike depression will ever remain.

THE HOLY STONE.

When Abraham the Kabey framed
His scaffold was the Holy Stone
Whose power to move itself he claimed
Both up and down was all its own.
Above his tomb an iron chest
This sacred relic keeps confined,
Locked like a secret in man's breast
Safe from the greed of all mankind.
The footprints of the patriarch
Upon its summit still are shown,
Quaint are the characters which mark
The surface of this "holy stone".

THE WELL OF ZEM ZEM.

Northward from Kabey where the Hatim stood
Mohammed preached the doctrines he thought good
While he still dwelt in Mecca. Further east
The well of Zem Zem, pride of Moslem priest,
Pours forth its waters. Pilgrims on the brink
Of this rare fount with eager fondness drink
With zest as keen as youth a maid's sweet love,
Health giving power descending from above
Rests on these streamlets: flagons wrought of gold
And cups of sterling silver such as hold
The wines of Harem, prize their wealth untold.

IN THE BIRTHDAY OF OUR REPUBLIC.

Colonial chieftains of our warlike clans,
Brave as the knights of Albion's thrifty isle
Charged bayonets through savage hostile bands,
Transfixing hecatombs upon each pile.
The lofty pines unscathed by forest fires
Amidst the thickets of the mountain ash
Erect their towering heads like temple spires
Above the stormy clouds and lightning's flash.

These emblems of man's pride, his pomp and power
Which rival the dread majesty of kings,
Still ward the empire in stern danger's hour
While cherubs spread the aegis of their wings.
Ours is the land of Freedom's guileless care,
Strong in her guard of brave heroic men,
Honored by women virtuous and fair
Whose daughters are the choicest that we ken.

Such be the flowers of state and blooming fronds
Which Heaven bestows to deck and cheer men's lives.
These be, O Liberty, the Runic wands
Through whose mysterious charms our country thrives.
Though alien ships far stouter built than she
Have borne their inmates down to ocean graves
Our craft sails o'er the hungry wasteful sea;
Her ponderous bulk defies both wind and waves.

In days of yore though anarchists could tease
With deep intent to plot the death of kings,
Our sires unfurled their banner to the breeze,
Shielded their sons beneath the eagle's wings.
With glad delight upon her natal day
America beheld the rise of dawn
As round the mother's cheek joy's dimples play,
When after travail's throes her child is born.

This is the home to Washington held dear
And ours the country Warren died to save,
The fatherland which our fond hearts revere
Each vale and hill hallows some patriot's grave.
Their deeds no memory would wish to blot;
Her canopy the welkin's stars bestud;
Heaven's splendid orbs survey no grander spot
Bedewed with tears and riched with sacred blood.

THE WHITE STONE.

The white stone, there can be no doubt
For Moslem legends plainly tell
Receives the rain from golden spout
And forms the tomb of Ishmael.

TIES OF FRIENDSHIP.

There is a nook wherein fond memory dwells
In rapt delight upon the bygone days
When friendship's ties, as some old ballad tells,
Furnished the theme for passion's rival lays.

Emotions like the love we owe a mother
Implant a tenderness which most endears,
The cord that binds one soul unto another
Grows firmer through the lapse of passing years.

Among the ruins withered, old and rotten
The verdure thrives; fresh buds and blossoms start;
Age knows no hour when friends shall be forgotten,
Though time and distance drive them wide apart.

What shall we do when ties are rent asunder?
Where shall we go when life's sweet dream is past?
Before us worlds of mystery and wonder
Erect their thrones where spirits dwell at last.

There is a pang in parting with our treasure,
Although the gold be mingled thick with dross,
The strength of our affection has its measure
By heavy grief and sorrow for our loss.

Alas! the bond of friendship must be broken,
Save that remembrance holds our lost still dear;
Closed be the eyes when love's last word is spoken,
Yet may we feel the spirit ever near.

AN INSCRIPTION TO A LOVELY GIRL.

Stranger beware nor roughly tread
Upon the sod that here lies new,
Where mourner's tears so lately shed
Still mingle with the morning dew.

Fresh flowers some pious hands have strewn
On this fair spot 'neath yew-tree's shade,
Whose fragrant beauty all their own
Soon drooping in an hour will fade.

Sweet as these flowers in freshest bloom
Was love which cherished this fair maid;
A deeper grief, a darker gloom
O'ertook us when our hopes decayed.

Robins still sing their requiem
In plaintive notes on yonder bough,
While wounded hearts respond to them
In token of love's sacred vow.

Beneath this spangled sky we build
Our altar here, our holy shrine,
And pledge our vows to be fulfilled
While heaven's eternal stars shall shine.

THE STORM AT SEA.

On the coast of the Atlantic
Stands a maiden's cot romantic,
Echoing to the breaker's roar
While the tide of life's emotion
Swells to greet the troubled ocean
Dashing on the rocky shore.

From the wild waves deeply sighing
Winds that howl, and groans of dying
Boatmen seek the sheltered lee.
Youth with love and beauty laden
Rapt in dalliance of the maiden
Hear the music of the sea.

Scenes which thrill the soul with terror
Through the storm-king's fatal error,
Swell throughout the lurid air;
To man's view the dread unfolding
Strikes with fear the eye beholding
Wreck and ruin everywhere.

Far around the beach is scattered
With the spars of vessels shattered
To the bound of Neptune's tide,
Where the storms are rudely beating
Thunder-clouds and tempest meeting
Toss the white-winged ships aside.

Hark, ye hear the sea-boy's story,
Reckless life mid scenes of glory.
How he climbs the mizzen spar
While the ship rocked like a cradle,
Dipping billows as a ladle,
Floats adrift without a star.

All the sky is densely clouded,
Heaven itself with gloom is shrouded,
While the world grows dark to me
Look ye how the flashes glisten
Hear the thunder-clap and listen
To the storm that rules the sea.

TYPES OF DARKEST GLOOM.

The sweetest rose I ever knew
Once blossomed near my garden wall;
The sun that kissed the morning dew
Beheld its leaflets fade and fall.

A fledgling nested on the bough,
Her head with mother's wings begirt,
Watching the furrow of the plough
She fell and took a grievous hurt.

Beneath the curtains wrought in gold
Fair was the prince as there he slept.
Dim were his eyes; his limbs grew cold
And o'er his bier a nation wept.

The peasant all too poor to own
The cradle where his babe may rock,
Feels grief as keen called to bemoan
As any king death's cruel shock.

From lowest beds of earth's decay
Midst marshy heaths, and fells below
Where spreads the dark untrodden way
The brightest mosses thrive and grow.

When midnight shades surround with gloom
The life bereft of all that's dear,
Treasures lie buried in the tomb,
Risen from death new hopes appear;

Then from the cerements of the dead
Where mortal flesh still crumbling lies,
Spring up the roses white and red
Whose beauty never fades nor dies.

A RETURNING PILGRIM.

A SONG.

Bright the stars now shine around me
In the welkin's dome
Orbs which light the path of darkness
Where earth's pilgrim's roam.

CHORUS:

Sweet the rose that scatters perfume
Through the scented breeze
Grateful to my sense are moonbeams
Shadowed by the trees.

Silence and an awful stillness
Hush the fields around
Fairies trip with faintest footprints
On this hallowed ground.

Elfish shadows, mist of dreamland
Vanish through the gloam
Yonder lo! there see my cottage
Children, wife and home.

CHORUS:

Sweet the rose that scatters perfume
Through the scented breeze
Grateful to my sense are moonbeams
Shadowed by the trees.

INSCRIPTION ON A TOMBSTONE.

Warrior of God, lay down thine armour now,
Life's battle ended, quire the song of peace,
From sweat of conflict wipe thy blood-stained brow,
'Tis time, grey hero, that thy warfare cease.

Haul down the banner from the castle walls
Furl up the victor's flag which waves o'erhead
Thine ears shall heed no more the trumpet calls
Thine eyes see not again foe's martial tread.

Silent in thy dark tent the drummer's beat
Which summoned thee to duty's field of strife
The drum-corps used no note that sounds retreat
But cheered thee on beyond the verge of life.

Through fate which rules the world the die is cast
Henceforth to range the everlasting hills
Thy destined lot: the gates of bliss are passed
Thy soul with heaven's eternal rapture thrills.

THE LIMIT OF AMBITION AND SELF-LOVE.

Obsequious with fulsome flattery,
The flunky puffs man's pride with sottish zeal;
His adulations by their grossness fail,
Thus to deceive the wise who estimate
Merit alone, stripped of encumbrances.
Perfection lies beyond the human soul,
Compassed in circles, heavenly and Divine.

THE WOUNDS OF PASSION WITHOUT REMEDY.

Factitious scars upon the child's fair hand,
Cut by the blade of boyhood's ruthless steel,
Become obliterate in man's old age;
But wounds upon the mind, as years roll by,
Sink down too far and leave their scars too deep
For time's rough surgery.
Grief, anger and revenge, how keen their edge!
When whetted, like the chisel on its stone.

THE COSMIAD.

THE FIRST DUAN.

1 RESOURCES OF THE MUSE.

Let loose the reins of fancy while I sing
For thee, Calliope, this modest lay;
Aid me to touch the graceful strings in tune,
On great Apollo's lyre, whose charming song,
Resounded once on famed Lavinian shores;
There Maro caught the music and the fire
Of bards inspired with poesy's bright flame,
Sing, thou celesial Muse, with thy shrill voice,
Of earth's well-ordered frame and tragic end,
And man's heroic life in this dark world.
On the fair hills of Thrace each poet strolls,
Where fountains gush from deep Pierian springs.
O may these waters gratefully instil
Their freshness and their sweetness through each word,
Which like the drop fills up this measure's brim.

THE PROEM.

2 A PLEA FOR POESY.

When slumber draws the curtain of the night,
Around the couch where innocence reclines,
On pillows soft as down, how placid seem
Those dreams of honeyed bliss which fancy's child,

Pictures upon that fabric of thin air.
By what strange art the brain of man transforms,
These unsubstantial shadows of the mind
Into real images and figured shapes,
From tissues of such vapid nothingness,
Transcends the reach of man's philosophy,
With wisdom's gifts to fathom and reveal.
With equal skill and beauty doth the bard
Trace and arrange these phantoms in his verse,
With exquisite delight, and no man knows,
The fount of inspiration whence it flows.

3 POET'S PASSION.

These words may seem as false and frantical,
As poems once by forgery ascribed
To Rawley's muse; but glowing thoughts will live,
As long as time shall last or earth endure.
And they will stand still burnished for the fight
Against detractive minions of the night,
Who fain would quench the sparkling of their light,
In earth's dark chambers of oblivion.
These thoughts, beguiling oft our idle hours,
Lead fancy captive to the chains of wit,
And lock the senses in Elysium.
Alas, why should the shattered intellect,
Dull as a broken bell, and out of tune,
So harshly jangled these wild discords play,
Instead of reason's music.

Frenzied minds
Distempered with that heat no nostrum heals,
Bereft of nature's guide, now touch the strings,
Whose notes sound false with a vanished melody.
The poet though enrapt with passion's glow,
Chastens and guides his frenzy in due course,
To noble strains which stir the nation's heart.
Baubles and toys, playthings of haughty peers,
Formed like a gourd to perish in an hour;
Such froth and empty stuff composed of dreams,
Woven from shadows,—call this poesy?
It seems too vapid, flat and dull to wear
The livery of time's unnumbered years,
Or bear the stamp immortal on its brow.

4 POETRY'S LOFTY PLEASURE.

Not for the beauty of its phrase alone,
Its stately measure and majestic tread,
Does poetry bear sway in human hearts;
But rather for the sympathy it feels
In every phase of human want and woe.
Of such a literary boon to man,
We can not be too prodigal of praise,
The verse which sounds like viols to the ear,
Oft thrills the heart with chords of harmony.
There is a height above the reach of kings,
Although they strive to gain more lofty thrones,

Where poets grapple with that winter's wind,
Which drives the storm-cloud from his brooding nest,
From whence their breath of inspiration flows.

5 POETRY IN NATURE.

There is a musick in the zephyr's breeze,
In the soft whisper of the forest leaves,
And the sweet evening air all dripped with dew;
They only need the voice and tuneful lyre,
Of nature's bards to shape their melody
To ears most grateful for their winsome song.
Some poets flash like spectral meteors,
Or comets in their circuits through the sky,
They rise in splendor; but alas! how soon,
Proud glory sets in gloom;—the choicest few,
Like planets, sun and stars, march in their spheres,
Through years and ages with their light undimmed.
However high the arrows and the birds,
May wing their way above the fleecy clouds;
Some realms of space still lie beyond their flight,
Where noble thoughts may reach the dizzy height,
Should they though quaking, neither fag nor fail.

6 REASON DISCLAIMED.

Prophets and ancient seers from Hebron's wild,
Empaled around with circlets of red fire
(As round Iulus' head spread lambent flame)
Betokened transports of the poet's maze.

So from Eleusis rose the wizard's spell,
That haunts the Bactrian princes with the ghost
Of her dead spouse howe'er wild fancy's rage,
Usurps the seat of reason's banished throne.
Masked hypocrites with halo archly crowned,
Impersonate the saintly patriarchs,
With Simon Magus' sorcery bewitched,
Subtle as Lucifer, arch and accurst,
Beneath whose artful irony the fiends
Quivered and quailed, or smiled with ghastly grin,
That caused a shudder midst the realms of gloom.

7 UNEARTHLY VISITANTS.

Through this demoniac world the shapeless forms
Of ghostly visitants fill earth's dim air,
Drawn from the courts of heaven's empyreal space,
The eager hosts on high crook their strained necks,
To gain a glimpse of demons robed in gauze,
While shadows pass in outline well disguised.
Spirits of upper or the nether spheres,
Dance lightly on the bosom of the clouds,
While darkness spreads her wings of ebon shade,
Above the deep abysm or desert waste.
No breath or sound disturbs the listening ear,
Save the soft murmur of the ocean tides,
Which beat against the confines of the shore.

8 SPIRITS UNSEEN.

These beings which thus hover in mid-air,
Screened from the gaze of mortal eyes of flesh,
Bear in their hands the woof and warp of life,
Whereby man weaves his web of destiny.
Hid in the mazes of some tangled wood,
These spirits lead him on to danger's cliff,
Until he totters on its utmost verge;
But gains deliverance and timely aid,
From buxom elf or knightly cavalier.
Festoons of ivy crown the panelled arch,
Beneath the spangled dome of night's gray sky.
The cold, pale moon that travels e'er alone,
Looms in the distance through yon fleecy cloud.

9 STEALTHY DEATH.

The stars look down through eyes of planet mold,
Enchased with rubies richly set in gold,
Engrailed as 'twere with rare Saint Cuthbert's beads.
We tread the mazes of this mystic world,
Through dismal and black chaos thickly veiled,
With curtains of the night, mid mysteries
And gloom, encountered on our way
With doubts and fears, misgivings, auguries,
Which crush our blooming hopes within the grasp
Of Time's all-conquering hand. Fail not to mark
How curtly that sly visitant called death,

Which steals through chambers in the dead of night,
With wanton playfulness sports with man's life,
As with some worthless toy; but cloyed with jest,
Crowns his mad pranks by dashing it to earth,
Breaking to atoms past all hope of mending,
The fragile image formed of potter's clay.

10 GRIEF IN PARTING.

Mingled emotions of despair and grief,
Fill this pent heart when dear ones die. We weep:
The scalding tears drop from these swollen lids,
In plenteous showers to drench these furrowed cheeks;
So Jesus wept when Lazarus had died.
And nothing but the hope which springs from Christ,
Can still man's throbbing brain, suppress his sighs,
Quiet the sobs, subdue the anxious fears,
Or soothe the sadness of his aching heart.
Whether I walk through rough Hyrcanian wilds,
Or else with burning feet tread those parched plains
Of Nubia; still everywhere I meet
My fellow travelers, wending their weary way,
In search of that lost city which all souls
Pursue throughout the crooked, winding paths,
Along life's devious road as seamen seek
Atlantis, buried in Poseidon's gulf.

11 HUMAN YEARNINGS.

The eager heart yearns while each pilgrim cries
In bitterness: O where is Arcady?

Why is it that within this burdened breast,
The fire of longing burns, no flood can quench,
Why rage these wild desires like frantic fumes,
Whose feverish outburst spares no anodyne—
Ravings no skillful alchemist can heal?
O couldst thou break asunder from earth's power,
Snap chains of vice which hold with links of steel,
Which fetter thy weak limbs, by Eblis bound,
Buffet with sinew's force the torrent's rage,
And stem the whirling tide before it mounts
Above thy head and bears thee swiftly down,
Into that eddying vortex of Hell's gulf.

12 STRENUOUS DISCIPLINE.

Hath Heaven the will to grant proud man control
Of lusts which rage and rave within his breast,
Like the untamed elements of stormy seas,
When winds tear clefts in topmost crest of waves?
With giant's mighty strength we topple down,
The lusty billows which would drive us on,
To sleep in gloomy death's cold, icy grasp.
We heed that God who rides upon the wind
Midst terror, curbs the fury of the storm.
Job was a man so wise, well versed in wit,
That from the lap of fortune chose he stripes
And lashes rude which point the way to worth,
Much rather than her bold, lewd courtesies;
Or her embraces which degrade the soul;

And sought more eagerly the frowns of Fate,
Than her bland smiles which woo to ruin's wreck.
He kept no courtly fool to charm his ear,
With flattery, guile, or guise of fond deceit,
Patterned no form like Satan's monstrous child,
Born of wild brain, disordered fantasy,
As earth's parturient mountain opes her womb,
To bring forth prodigies of molten waste.

13 GOD'S MIGHTINESS.

God measures earth's ecliptic with a span,
And girdles heaven's host with lightning's flash.
Quick as the twinkling of His piercing eye,
He hollows out the vault of Fingal's cave,
In Hebrides, on Staffa's sea-girt isle,
And wields the waves which dash against cape Wrath.
Before his august power the nations bow,
The Bishop in his rochet, and the peer
In mantelet, yea all who wear the pomp,
And gaudy trappings of a King obey His high behests.
More marvellous it is that He can love
Base man whose puny arm defies His power,
Or tolerate within His sheltering care,
So vile an ingrate as this worthless tool.

14 APPROACH OF MORN.

Man boasts of valor, wisdom, strength,
Yet with the smallest task grows weary, faint,

Takes to his couch for needed rest and sleep,
Though slightly injured cries like some whipped child,
Too naughty even to claim the hope to live.
Now through the collied pillars of the night,
The garish day peeps in, fresh tinged with hues,
Which morn portrays upon the mantling cloud,
In crimson colors on heaven's damask brow.
Into commatic periods and years,
The sun divides man's life; and he beholds
Each hour an infant generation born,
And many young and aged laid to rest.

15 BREVITY OF LIFE.

The anatomic structure of this frame,
So skillfully adjusted to its end,
Obeys the heart's pulsations through the years,
And never for one instant cease those throbs,
Until disease at last clogs every wheel,
And this machine stops working at God's will.
The compass of this life appears as 'twere,
An instantaneous twinkling of the eye.
One moment after heaven's grey dawn appears,
Night comes to shut the door on weary day.
The mist which hovers o'er the mountain top,
The fleecy cloud which floats in summer air,
The dew which sparkles on the hillside flower,
The frost which blights the early buds of spring,
Melt not so soon, nor yet dissolve so fast,

Beneath the rays of tropic suns, whose heat
Dispels them all in forms impalpable,
As doth the vapor of a human life,
In man's brief day which speeds with restless flight.

16 THE DARK VAULT.

Upon earth's mounds now view the countless graves,
Or in her vales where human skeletons
Lie buried deep beneath the dark, cold clod,
Or on the ocean's bed of mouldering bones;
Behold how wide a swath Time's scythe hath mown!
How large autumnal harvests Death hath reaped!
Those tranquil nations calmly rest and sleep:
No sound of earth disturbs their sweet repose;
Dull are their ears and dark their sightless eyes,
In dismal silence pass their hours away.
And we shall be like them—who knows how soon?
At birth the die is cast which puts our life
In hazard of surcease.

17 THE MISTY MORN.

Sometimes the morn
Is dark and stormy, while black clouds o'erhang
The murky sky, and when the wild winds cease,
Before the noontide rings the quiet knell.
How oft the bride and groom, joined hand in hand,
Start out with dewy footprints on the lawn,
Ascend the hill together till high noon,

They reach the summit and descend its slope,
Lie down to sleep at even 'neath its base.
No sooner does the flitting summer end,
Than winter's solstice rules the closing year.
Alcedo, king-bird of the billow's crest,
Broods on her nest among the wave-washed crags,
Which jutty o'er the surging ocean's verge.
On rocky reefs where shipwrecked cargoes cling,
She sits and listens to the moaning sea.

18 THE GOAL OF HOPE.

Born in rough weather in the world's rude storm,
The soul takes flight on pinions swift as wind,
Consults the stars to find the horoscope,
Which rules the fate of her nativity.
Nor rests to plume her wing till she hath gained,
The fields of halcyon balm in realms of peace.
In spirit dreams behold we that ascent,
Higher than eagles soar, beyond the clouds,
On Jacob's ladder leading to the sky,
Where angels climb accompanied by man.
The brilliant prospect of the heights beyond,
Surpassing all conceptions of man's hope,
Gives power of toleration thus to bear,
These human griefs and loads of bitterness.

19 WHERE IS THE HAVEN?

When faith reveals to our admiring gaze,
The end of suffering, the reward of toil,

It fans hope's embers into glowing flame,
Kindles the eye with rapture and delight.
O tell us ye hoar sages, where to flee,
That we may rid us of these cumbrances,
Which bind the spirit in such shackled straits;
How deal with this dull compound made of clay,
Compact of human passions, vices, fears,
Which storm the breast with hell's fierce enginery.
Where shall we seek the anchorage for hope,
Amid the tossings of tempestuous waves,
The tumults of life's ocean, wild and drear?
The gate of this world's grief swings open wide,
Wherein the path of sorrow grows so broad,
That all mankind may jointly go abreast;
But heaven's wicket proffers scanty space,
For one among that multitude to pass
That door with earth's emblazoned armor on.

20 BOTH SIDES OF THE LETHEAN STREAM.

How soon amidst hushed voices shall we see,
Cold, pallid limbs, with stiff and frigid forms,
Eyes closed, cheeks pale, brows rigid, silent lips!
This complex mixture of earth's substances,
Which we call world goes right on still the same,
Consummate Wisdom, when life's functions cease,
Controls the structure of this universe,
As constant as heaven's constellations stand,
Within the vast empyrean of fixed stars.

There was a time in earth's long history,
When just one million lived upon her breast;
Beneath the surface slept as many more;
But since that moment of life's gradual scale,
Thus poised in equal balance on the beam,
How vast a number of inhabitants,
The waking and sleeping swelled those ranks,
Till dwellers here surpass man's reckoning,
While countless multitudes now fill earth's graves.
As withered wort when pinched and killed with frost,
Lies buried in the earth; so man, the prey
Of mighty foes with which he copes,
Shall waste away in dust until God's voice,
Convokes one great assembly of death's spoils.
Storm on bold Winter with your cold, bleak winds,
While Nature shivers in her shroud of snow,
With bitterness and cruelty severe,
As man's ingratitude or woman's scorn.
Deeper than chasms upon the Alps,
Where gloars the chamois scaped from courser's chase,
Man's hopes and fears lie mingled with his dust.
Time's mortal centuries mould and decay,
Beneath the tide of human sufferance,
Long ere life's stormy billows cease to roll.

21 DESTINY.

No corselet can protect against those darts,
Which hit the breast from death's relentless bow;

No wattled cot can hem this monster in:
Wide through the world he stalks through tragic scenes,
With visage grim and woful countenance,
Acting his part with ancient buskins shod.
Yearning for home, the human spirit craves
Deliverance from bonds which to earth chain.
Each soul claims freedom from corroding cares,
Beneath the shelter of imperial crowns.
I hear the rumbling of those chariot wheels,
Through death's dark valley rolling on.

22 HEEDLESS THE WORLD MOVES ON.

I see
The flaming cloud which hovers round these hills,
Waiting to bear the disembodied soul,
Through heaven's etherial space to yonder gate,
Where stands the warder with his blazing sword.
Behind me friends are weeping; ah! how soon
The sorrowing dry their tears; though some still mourn,
The loss deserves no thought; so worlds move on,
As though some child had spoiled a worthless toy.
In savage and morose asperity,
The cosmic universe remains austere,
Her wide domains untrammelled through man's grief.
Begirt with cincture tinged in heaven's bright rays,
She wanders on a wondrous spectacle,
A mother cruel to her foster-child,
The orphan ward entrusted to her care,
Heedless alike of human joy or woe.

23 AMID EARTH'S SMILES AND TEARS.

The twilight of life's glimmer pale and faint,
Augurs curtailment to man's crescent hope.
Death shooting through crevelles, himself unhurt,
Forces the battle from veiled parapets.
Mid crackling thorns the torch's flame ascends,
Which burns the gossamer whereon life hangs.
While crants still ornament the virgin grave,
The laughing and the weeping mingle there,
In accents deafening to ears thus shocked,
With boisterous prattle.
O how yearns the heart
For some sweet solitude, a lonely lodge,
Within the pale of some vast wilderness.
There hear we music of the vacant woods,
Rustling of forest trees and screech of owls,
Within the darkness of the night; and there
The spirits walk abroad till daylight springs,
To fill the sky along the east and fright
The ghosts away. Among those sights and sounds
Dwell mysteries of cumbered shade, in haunts
So weired, that souls shall find life's solace there.
Meanwhile throughout the habitable globe,
The hum of business and the strife of words,
Cease not to mar man's project to gain peace.

24 EMANCIPATED SOULS.

Flaming crantaras light the battle-field;
The drumbeat and the bugle call to arms;
While murder, bloodshed, plunder, rapine, theft,
Arouse man's bestial rage and stir his ire,
Or stimulate his greed for wealth and gore.
Our dearest hopes lie anchored in that land,
Ten million leagues beyond the stormy coast,
Where roll the cloud-born thunders through such skies,
As mantle earth with shroud of mist and gloom.
The souls once shackled with these corporal chains,
Emancipated from these prison bounds,
Shall rise as free as eagles and shall soar,
From earth above the clouds and stars,
To yonder realms of glory, light and joy.

25 THE HOME RETURNING PRODIGAL.

Upward from our captivity we'll fly,
Unto our native aerie in the heavens,
Amid the quiet scenes of rest and peace,
Where watchful guards await our coming home,
As pilgrims sojourning in foreign lands,
Glad that our weary wanderings now cease.
When Hebe shall her cup of nectar bring,
By which immortal sages quench their thirst,
With jaunty air the banquet we'll partake,
With magic talisman upon our breast,

As wild caciques their feast of lotus eat,
In halls of luxury midst royal bowers.

26 BATTLING OF DEPRAVED SPIRITS.

Vast armies come with haste in quick-step time,
The hosts of evil march against the soul,
With ranks close filed or wide apart deployed,
They sortie from dark trenches with trailed arms;
With overwhelming force disperse our troops,
While our weak power displays no skill to match
Their stern puissant strength. A few they seize
As captives; but the rest they madly slay.
The slaughter widens while the fight goes on.
See where the bleeding victims pile the plain,
Slain by those lusts and passions which destroy,
Ten thousand denizens all felled to earth,
By one sharp blow.

27 TRIUMPHANT VALOR.

On moral battlefields,
The brave survivors who escape the thrust
Of poison arrows soon renew the strife.
Some of these heroes fall, but others live
And march in triumph to celestial thrones,
Crowned with the martyr's wreath of victory.
The mariner who sails to yonder shore,
On seas of glory while they ebb and flow,

From neaptide to the springtide safely borne,
Shall reach that haven and cast anchor there.
Then grasp a sceptre in thy sovereign hand,
And bind tiaras round thy royal brow,
For thou art king. Yea soldier, sailor, saint,
Or hero, martyr, slave, thou shalt be king.

28 HESITATION AWAITING THE LAST SLEEP.

That sleep whose pillowed head lies on soft down,
Awaits in deathlike silence and repose,
To breathe the calm, sweet stillness of the night.
O Death say when shall we lie down asleep,
Relieved from earth's anxieties and toils,
Forgetful of life's needs, temptations, cares,
In quiet rest beneath the moss-grown stone
From sorrow, tears and pain forever free?
Why falter we upon the awful brink
Of life's deep precipice which witness gives,
That one bold leap so soon shall end it all?
So vivid are the scenes, so loud the sounds,
Which now we see and hear, that we perceive
No glimmer and no echo from that world,
Which hidden lies beyond the farthest reach
Of mortal eye and ear.

29 FEARLESS TRUST IN GOD.

That far off land,
Its caverns unexplored mid boundless spheres,

Its mountain wilds and fastnesses, of these
Man knows as little as the child unborn.
Where lies that country filled with dismal vales,
Whose dense, grim shadows half conceal the forms,
Which spirits wear, mantled in sombre clouds?
How soon these feet must tread the misty cells,
Of that dark prison-house where ghosts are chained.
We know that not one ray of light or joy,
From heaven's bright sphere can penetrate the gloom
Of hell's dim chambers, dreary haunt of groans.
Child of imperious destiny, fear not
To jump into this chasm, this void abyss,
But launch thy galley on the troubled waves,
And fix thine eye of faith on beacon lights,
Which shine from yonder shore and lure thee there.
Thy staunchest Friend stands at the helm to guide
The ship through storm and breakers to that world,
Where thine own Father waits with open arms,
Eager to greet his home-returning son
With welcome to the joys of His abode.
Each weary, heavy laden pilgrim there
Drops his last burden down.

30 SHELTERED INNOCENCE.

How little do young maidens know of pains,
And fears in that dark labyrinth untrod,
Where they must grope through sorrow's dismal cave?
Though some there are in infancy who sleep

Beneath a mother's watchfulness and care,
Whose sheltered childhood feels the gentle touch
Of sympathy in all their childish sorrows.
Yet even these must suffer and must weep
Beneath the burden of mortality.
Too oft their sensitive and tender hearts
Must grieve as bitterly o'er broken toys,
As kings for their lost sceptres, this is sure,
Although you buy a thousand pretty dolls,
'Tis like the mother's babe, there's none so dear
As she that's gone.

31 IN DESPERATION.

We need not muse what pranks,
Vindictive fortune plays among the youth
In riper years. Their miseries swell so big,
That many soothe their pains with anodynes.
Some choose the refuge of the suicide;
Sooner than bear life's burdens such as theirs,
Man puts the dagger to his hopeless breast,
And flees to sorrows that he knows not of.
But learn ye rather to endure and suffer,
With manly spirit bravely meet life's ills,
Buffet such woes as wrestling heroes dare.
Struggling against the stream toward yonder shore,
Straining contentious sinews with stern zeal,
Ye soon shall reach the land where olives grow,
And palm trees spread their soothing, grateful shade.

32 SAFE IN TEMPESTUOUS GALES.

In midnight gloom, while drifting o'er the waves,
Your bark without a rudder ploughs the deep,
Ye stand upon the deck amid the cries
Of fellow passengers, all wild with fear,
When heaven's pent thunder-cloud in anger bursts;
The stormy wind in fury fiercely rends
The yards of your frail craft which mounts on high,
A plaything twirled on curling billows' crest,
In awe, and terror drenched with brine ye stand,
A spectacle so pitiful to gods,—
Commit your trust to Him who walked on waves
Of Gallilee, who stilled the tempest's rage
On lake Genesseret. He calms the sea;
He brings the storm-tost sailer safe to port,
Within the harbor of Immanuel's land.

33 DESPAIRING MAN AWAITS HIS CHANGE.

Hopeless and desperate man struggles on,
Bereft of friends, of dignities despoiled,
Till crushed to earth, cut off with quick dispatch,
Drawn at the heels as swift as horse can flee,
Victim of pitiless remorse and shame,
To cruelty he yields his wretched life.
The shadows which he tries to catch escape
His grasp. He leaves the world with no regret,
But few survivors briefly mourn his loss.

The envoy sent to disavow these ills,
Speaks naught in malice or derisive scorn,
To quell the murmurs of man's misery;
But pleads with suavity that he must bear
The yoke which subjugates his selfish pride.

34 THE CURE OF UNREST.

The beggar's pallet rudely built of straw
Yields comfort that most princes fain would share;
And could the king his diet taste with zest,
Relish the morsel which keen hunger craves,
The monarch gladly would exchange his crown.
What burdens to King Charles were cares of state,
Who for contentment could resign his throne.
How many princes would their empire give,
Not like King Richard for a battle horse,
But to secure one night of peaceful sleep,—
That sleep which soothes hot passion's fevered brow,
Kind altruist that binds up sorow's wound.

35 PAEANS TO THE CREATOR.

Bright as the blazoned bezel of her rings,
The golden satellites of Saturn speed,
Through their diurnal circles far remote,
From central pivot of the sun removed,
Below like earth from sky or hell from heaven.
Yea we might add like mortal man from God.
All glorious Creator by whose hand

The firmament outstretched stands nobly decked,
With millions of bright orbs, how dost thou guard
The smallest atom in Thy universe.
Who shall restrain man from admiring love,
When all these countless worlds, the hosts of heaven,
The thousand generations of mankind,
Obedient to the word of Thy command,
Bow at Thy feet, and celebrate Thy praise!

36 CONTINUED PRAISES.

At morning and at eve we hear their songs,
And orisons which rise up to Thy throne.
Perpetual anthems day and night they sing
With sweet melodious voice, clear cadences
Resounding far through earth and boundless sky.
While ages wing their speedy flight away,
There's no cessation of their happy song.
How plainly nature speaks to us of God!
Mountains and hills proclaim His sovereignty;
Seasons and years display His wondrous skill;
The stars, those seers and prophets which foretell
His future plans, reveal His august power.
The blue arched vault above us in the height;
The soft, green carpet which we tread beneath;
Alike remind us of Heaven's gifts to man.

37 TRUSTFUL INNOCENCE OF CHILDHOOD.

The infant rocking in his narrow crib,
Or sweetly cradled in his mother's arms,

Heeds not the smitings of a ruthless world,
Mid smiles and tears he knows no hopes nor fears,
With cheek as fair as bosom of chaste love
On which his head lies pillowed. And the youth
Who sees the dewdrops sparkling in the sun,
Like diamonds clustered in the jeweled broach,
Rises to greet the cheerful god of day,
While he ascends the east, recks not the change,
Nor marks he in the flitting morn of life,
Before the sun has reached meridian glow,
How soon he will descend the western sky,
And sink beyond the ocean's utmost verge;
So swiftly shall the morning, noon and eve
Of man's brief life speed by when he shall rest
Within the glades in shadows of the night.

38 THE STORM.

The wild winds playing heave a mournful sigh
Whether they frolic with the trees or waves
And pluck the topmost with a villain's hand
Storms smite the bending pines and drive the ships
With riven masts upon the shoal of rock
While seamen cling unto the broken spars.
I gazed into the clouds where war held sway,
The fire of guns and their terrific roar
Dazzled mine eyes and deafened my poor ears;
Flash quick on flash its fellow followed fast,
The welkin trembling with the echo's din,

It was a scene to paralyze man's heart
With fears whose tragic sequel threatens death,
Such terror speeds from heaven's artillery.

39 MAN'S TROUBLES HAVE A PLACID END.

Contrast this view with earth's more peaceful scenes
Where flocks of lambs graze on the quiet mead
Or climb the gentle slope on yonder hill.
Man hath such calms and storms as prodigal
He shares with nature her most fitful mood
His temper bent to match each phase and clime
Like the chameleon changes every hour,
Let come what will: the showers which overwhelm
Teach men to bear the storms of troubled life.
Haste, princely maiden to that shining shore
Where streamlets gently flowing as of yore
Stir in our hearts the dream of nuptial bliss,
While from thy cheek I steal one honeyed kiss.
Glad thus to seize the proffered pledge of love
Which seals our vows with sanctions from above;
I wait thy coming to the silent stream
While fancy shifts the pictures of my dream.

THE COSMIAD.

SECOND DUAN.

1 SOLILOQUY BY ALFRETTO, AN IMPRISONED LOUT.

The east seems all aglow with lustrous flame,
As though the earth had taken fire beneath,
Those red hot rays which Phoebus showers down
To kindle joy in his diurnal train.
The blushing sun which peeps above the hills
Gives promise of his cheery light today.
Already hath the crowing cock called up,
The drowsy ploughman to his daily toil;
And man goes forth amidst the hum of bees
Through fragrant fields. But woe, alas, to me
The honey hath no sweetness and the flowers
No blossomed beauty in this prison-house.
I thought thee master, of a stouter mind,
That would not yield to trifles. Play the man
Speak not to me of trifles. Dost thou know
How I was seized and dragged by cruel force,
And shameful violence from that dear breast,
Whose walls enclose within a noble heart?
Ah, in this cell I've passed a fearful night,
Where bats and owls crowd all the crevices
Of this dark room, and I beheld such sights,
And heard such sounds, as make this torpid flesh

Creep, like a serpent's coil. This crazy loon
I swear, then saw those ghostly visitants,
Which hover round the tombs in spectral forms,
And visit graveyards by the gibbous moon.
Come, sit with me upon this mouldy stone,
While I rehearse my story for thine ear.
Thrice in the dead of night, all dark and still,
Awed by the gloom, the spectre stalked abroad.
No leaf bestirred, no breath of air was felt,
In that dread hour when darkness reigned supreme.
My bones in every limb grew tremulous;
Bristling with fright, the hair on crown and brow
Turned grey then white like the hoar-frost of age,
Dost thou dare interrogate these sprites?
Then tell me by heaven's oracles adjured,
What power resists encroachments of old age,
Or blunts the edge of death's relentless scythe?
Beneath the blight of heaven's dread curse I fell;
So must I bear the bane of sore disease,
And with this rueful malady must die.

2 MOHAMMEDAN VERSUS CHRISTIAN.

Caliphs of Cufa for the Saracens,
Artful to win their Moslem proselytes,
Whose turbans, glowing in the morning sun,
Show purple, richer than of Tyrian dye,
As bright as orphil crimson;—these are they
Who teach the cult of Allah.

They fought in cuerpo, armed with no cuirass,
But with hot courage and their deadly blades
With burning zeal defended; many a knight
And brave crusader fell beneath the stroke,
Of their keen falchions. In their zealotism
They slew the guardians of Christ's sepulchre.
The crescent waved in triumph o'er the cross.
The Alkoran withstood the Hebrew bible,
The Turkish ataghan, the Christian sword.

3 THE DREAMY MAZE.

Above the mounds where sleep the heroes slain
The mournful cypress casts her gloomy shade.
The cruel corsair in his galley borne,
Intrepid as the fierce Norwegian hound,
As murderous as Bluebeard, haunts the sea
To sate his gross cupidity for gore.
Boundless in rapture with a pirate's joy,
Prince of the Vikings, none the less severe,
Whose retinue was countless as the stars,
With dagger red and clotted in heart streams,
Seized on his booty with a bloody hand.
With magic flashes from Aladdin's lamp,
We may catch glimpses of the robber's cave,
Where Ali Baba hides his forty thieves.
The giant-killer's slaughter strewed the earth
With heavy burdens, meet for mammoth graves.
Swifter than seven leagued boots can pace those hills,

Where helpless mortals dwell in constant fright,
Death comes a-galloping on pale white horse,
To scatter wide these bones through charnel vaults.

4 LIKE WATER, UNSTABLE.

Sad as the amaranth whose tears of blood,
Flow down in streams from eye-lids wet by grief,
And crimson earth's dark soil, man reasons, doubts,
And disbelieves, denies and fears, repents,
And straightway sins again; then overcome
With sadness pines the remnant of his days,
In penitence 'mid sorrow's darkest gloom;
Or else sequestered in some shady nook,
Where vines entwine among the grove of trees,
With tendrils clinging to their oaken boughs,
He oft lies dreaming on some bank of ferns,
And bids his seneschal prepare in haste
The sumptuous feast in his baronial hall.

5 ALL CONQUERING DEATH.

Grim visaged death! how like a monstrous fiend
Grimalkin with a griffon's strength revolts
Against the course of nature's confluence.
Death comes as resolute and stern as war,
As overwhelming as the pristine flood,
Whose fierce defacle swept earth's rocks away
From their deep anchorage in quarried caves;
Rending the flinty spars in shattered casts,

Whose fragments crown the peaks of lofty hills.
So death deals vigorous blows on human frames,
Whereby they prostrate fall in serried ranks,
To crowd ten thousand vaulted sepulchres.
The death-watch ticks and lulls her brood to sleep,
And presages with time's dull monotone,
The dissolution of the earthly ties.

6 TRANSITORY PLEASURES.

Upon the dial's mark; at just that hour,
Know that the life eternal will begin.
For when the gnomon casts its slender shade,
It needs bold courage in our untrained youth
To face the hazards of life's direful sea.
All sensual joys awaken in man's mind
Delusive hopes, which though they feign sweet smiles,
They flatter only to destroy. Their life
Though dear, is measured by a single day.
In dreamlike shadows, ghostly forms pass by,
Whose figures act the pleasures of an hour,
In scenic grandeur on this world's great stage,
In mien alive, but dead to human sense.
It is man's folly to extol earth's toys,
But sadly to decry Heaven's noblest gifts.

7 DESTINY WITHOUT LAW.

The laws which govern human destiny,
Were never published on the printed page

Of wise Justinian's pandects, or in codes
Of sage Lycurgus, nor can they be revealed,
By man's experience with empiric arts,
Though he might even list to demonstrate,
Skill and precision in bold auguries.
In regions where the dusky shadows lurk,
In haunts where wild mysterious fancies clothe
The dells with visionary forms and sprites,
The oracles of melancholy fate
Proclaim disasters to life's pilgrimage.

8 HOPE MORE JOYOUS THAN WINE.

These fancies acting as man's martinet,
To discipline with rigor his selfwill,
With incoherent reasonings and whims
Guide, warn or threaten contumacious wards
And teach refractory pupils fate's decree.
The cell of storied cloisters might reveal
To some disconsolate and fervid mind,
The balm that heals and touch that soothes man's sorrow.
The ancient Greek whose purple grape was pressed,
In vintage of rich gardens and fair fields
Of Argolis, consoled his aching heart,
With copious draughts, fresh from their native vine,
Or quenched his thirst, and cheered his downcast soul
By drinking with fond relish Thesbian wine,
Which flowed from urnlike, wide-mouthed amphoral.

But Christians in despite of Pagan schemes,
Find consolation in their depths of grief,
By drinking in the buoyancy of hope,
And thus exalt this base, ignoble world,
Above earth's atmosphere, beyond the stars,
To regions most remote, they know not where,
And fashion spheres of joy and ecstacy,
From realms of future and eternal peace.

9 AMBITION CLIMBING FOR FAME.

Young men in devious ways pursuing fame,
Or sensuous pleasure, when they sometime vault
Into the saddle of ambition, fall
Unhorsed upon the hard earth's rocky ground.
Alas! how difficult it is for man
To reach the summit of Fame's steep ascent
And scale the heights of glory! Vainly strive
A few choice spirits, climbing up the hill,
With weak and trembling steps to gain the top,
Until they tottering fall; some other men
With firmer grasp, hand over hand advance,
And on the ladder's rundle upward go;
But one alone among that multitude
By frequent shiftings to some higher plane,
At length can touch the goal and glancing down,
Smile on the struggling crowd below.

10 THE CHARM OF PLEASURE'S MINSTRELSY.

The minstrels of gay pleasure sing their lays,
Like sirens on life's dark enchanted isle,
And throw their din of music to the winds.
The nations all with trumpets to their ears,
Hear this infernal and discordant song,
From charms of their deceptive minstrelsy.
There's no escape albeit the oarsmen pull
For life away too soon to fall a prey,
Within the vortex of the ebbing tide.
So sweetly sound the pleasant rhapsodies,
That millions of our gay, unwary youth,
Enraptured with the charming melody,
Fall victims to the luring song. They plan
An Arctic voyage on life's stormy sea,
Amidst the icebergs and the rocky reefs,
And suffer shipwreck on the boreal coast.

11 YOUTH'S IDOLATRY OF PLEASURE.

In this vast temple of the universe,
The niches are all filled with images,
And hovering crowds of zealots worship these,
With superstitious reverence and awe,
The crouching multitude on bended knee
Profess their loyalty to potent kings,
Whose stupid fancy peoples crevices,
And nooks of earth with sovereign deities,

And shout: "These be thy gods, O Man, bow down
And worship and adore." And chief of these
Dionysus and Aphrodite stand,
To whom a host of men do sacrifice.
Some on the bed of lust to Venus give,
Their offerings and some to Bacchus pour
Libations with their cups of sparkling wine.

12 ILLUSIVE DREAMS OF JOY.

'Twere better to discard all joys, we trow,
Than to pursue these phantoms through the air,
These shapes of ignes fatui that rise
On summer nights from foul morass and graves.
With better reason might one hope to win
Ecstatic bliss by kissing pleasure's shadow,
What equanimity of mind can grasp,
That priceless gift of Stoical content,
Which teaches man to bear the bleak, cold storm
Of life's adversity with heart so stout,
That he regards it equal in esteem,
To cloudless sunshine of prosperity?

13 AIMLESS PURSUIT OF GAYETY.

'Tis long ago, since I set out with pride,
To travel through the circuit of the earth,
With gay companions mounted on hot steeds,
To view this scene of glory called the world.
How like a dream of night the picture seems,

Which calls to mind life's journey o'er the plain,
Through forest wild, on mountain side so grand,
So beautiful, so stately and sublime.
Man is endowed with faith and hope, two wings,
Wherewith he flies toward heaven. Deprived of one
His spirit droops and falls like some hurt bird,
That wounded by a dart sinks to the ground.
He struggles with ambitious, lofty aim,
To reach the summit of earth's happiness,
Learns to despise vain pleasure and gay sport,
That fugitive and transient merriment,
Which with the quickness of the lightning's flash
Appears an instant and then vanishes.
He chooses joys fixed as the smiling stars,
Whose splendor lasts the same all ages through,
Whose beauty fades not, but distils delight
Forever. And the wisdom of the sage
Combined with learning of philosophers,
Distinguished between these disparates,

14 BALANCE OF JUDGMENT.

The Pharisaic rule of Puritans,
Whose austere rigor makes all pleasure sin,
And laxity of faithless Saducees,
With morals dissolute as chevaliers'.
These statements of their principles professed,
Stand wide apart from truth as pole from pole,
'Tis argued by them both. The one avers;

The Puritan is no ascetic monk,
That lives in middle ages dark with gloom.
The other tells what we are glad to learn,
That they prize virtue as of priceless worth,
Far more than pleasure, yea than purest gold.
God only will discriminate and judge.
Strong motives must to virtue's side entice,
But weak inducements will abet to vice.

15 DEGRADING VICE.

How easy is it to persuade to lust!
Woman can tempt, as sure as wine degrades.
A mind distempered with some grave disease
May find its counterpart in that vile act,
Which compromises reason as its king,
Its guardian and guide. Some heads there are,
So shallow as to play the simpleton,
And say good morrow to the silent moon,
Toss up their caps in merriment and glee,
Yea kiss and ogle shadows of the owl.
Such men are ruined by fair girls and wine.
'Tis fancy's frantic, wild distemperature.
And oh! what folly and blind madness flow
From drowning sorrow in these cups of woe.

16 ABSTINENCE AND CHASTITY.

Is this the bliss of which the drunkard boasts,
To drink the beverage that steals away

All wholesome thought from man's disordered brain,
And sends him reeling in the gutter's mud?
In soberness and sense true manhood lives.
In virgin purity of womanhood
All virtues thrive, and so adorn the mind,
That man may worship at the maiden's shrine.
How loathsome to him is disgusting vice,
Which wears a livery of saintly form;
But mocks the garb with base hypocrisy.
The wintry snows upon a thousand hills,
Less cold and dreary seem than woman's face,
Whose virtue's lost because of careless keeping.
Then broken is the distaff which man's skill
Can not in years repair.
Then like a mandarin shorn of his cue,
She stooping sits in deep disgrace and shame,
And hides her wretched face within her hands,
Until she's forced to seek a quick release,
From life's despair so cruel, dark and sad,
In desperate self-slaughter or else finds
Asylum in the madhouse or the grave.
No deeper draught of sadness fills the cup
Of human sorrow in this world than flows,
To lips that taste the lees of passions depth;
They drain the last drop of life's bitterness.

17 CONTENTMENT AFTER SORROW.

Oh, what delight would be to man to taste,
The joys of pure and holy love, could he

Relieve that longing which he often feels
For quick enjoyment of the thing he loves,
Which so transforms his dreamy sentiment,
To bittersweet that his emotions change
To loathing and disgust. But no man knows
The pleasures of contentment till he feels
The gentle touch of grief, and gains relief
From some deep sorrow. Then he rests his head
Upon the lap of ease and luxury;
While Hebe bathes his temples, soothes his brow,
With the sweet dews and balmy anodyne
Of sleep. Could you but witness one sad scene,
The wild distraction and the frantic tears
Of children, who behold both parents seized,
Bound and condemned to death and in cold blood
Murdered, though innocent, would you complain
Of your slight troubles or brief pains?
Such deeds have happened and remain a blot,
To stain the dark page of man's cruelty.
The story of the world unfolds a score
Of pictures dark and tragically grand,
Of crafty and bold crimes done in the name
Of liberty, whose mention chills the blood,
And blanches man's pale cheek with frightfulness
And horror.

18 SYMPATHY WITH HUMAN SORROW.

Snatched away from life's fond ties,
How vast a number of earth's denizens

Have swept by swiftly with the endless train,
Which passes hourly through the gate of death,
On chariots of fire forever to enjoy
Heaven's placid light, so tranquil and serene.
How yearns the human soul in sympathy
With man's deep sorrows! How he longs to bind
The gaping wound with balm and minister
With tender hand to bleeding hearts, and soothe
Their painful throbs with touch that heals their aching!
One plays a role so insignificant
In this historic drama of man's life,
That single-handed and alone he feels
The vigor of his best endeavors lost,
In vain attempts to rectify his wrongs.

19 BALM FOR DISTRESS.

When tears of grief come dropping one by one,
When the rough tide swells and brings the flood,
Sighs heave the breast, the heart asunder bursts,
Then patience suffers from assault that kills,
Then weary heads bow down beneath the weight
Of boundless want and woe.
A cry of deep distress ascends to heaven,
From helpless man who feels oppressed and grieved
By burdensome constraints and ills which bind,
His spirits down to earth's ignoble dust.
O could he soar to heaven's exalted sphere,
And bury his remembrance of these plaints.

In some deep chasm where dark oblivion
Holds in her grasp all sad, suspicious fears.
Entrusted to her keeping, he would gain
Care's plastic balm that can lost health restore,
All ailments heal, and bleeding wounds repair,
Life's pains and griefs assuage.

20 MAN'S CRY APPEALS TO HEAVEN.

The Alpine cliff,
Though covered with the clouded canopy,
Or shrouded with the mist, towers not too high
To stretch beyond the reach of that wild scream,
Which like the cry of eagles rises up,
From these deep vales of human misery,
But even there we can still hear that wail,
So loud and shrill that its sad plaintive note
Fills earth and sky.
The ashes stored in sacred urn, the dust
Reposited in mausoleums tell
The story of decay. The documents
Recorded on the walls of mouldy tombs,
And stately pyramids still mark the spot,
Where elegies were read in earth's past days,
And dirges sung above the graves of kings,
And heroes in that early age while time
Was young, full sixty centuries ago.

21 NO TRACE OF FLESH IS LEFT.

The victims of pestilence and war,
Wherever they lie buried, testify
That life seeks many a way to find escape,
From this frail tenement of dust and clay.
Beneath the ground or on the ocean's bed,
These human forms lie scattered, wide and far.
In musty volumes of time's ancient lore,
We now discover nothing worth our search.
No record of their tears, no register of ills,
Which they once bore in common with their race.
Since early as the earth's primeval germs,
From which all nature sprung, that worm called death
Hath fed upon the damask cheek, transformed
Its rosy hue into black rottenness
And sombre dust.

22 PRIMEVAL DEPOSITS.

Delve down through old earth's crust,
To rocks where lie the petrified remains
Of forms gigantic as the mastodon,
Lo, these bear witness how triumphant death,
Dealt prehistoric discipline to brutes
Millions of ages antedating man.
The mute beast though he shed no tears, yet groaned
And writhed with pain that tortured his crushed limbs,
And wrung from his unwilling lips the cry,
Which spoke excruciating agony.

Save the bare hint that life holds pleasure's chance,
The rocks record no syllable of joy.
No sooner had creation dawned on earth,
Than Gama raised his bold, majestic frame,
Above the breathing world inspiring awe,
And bearing in his strong right hand a club,
He smote the victims of his potent ire,
With spiteful, cruel and relentless rage.

23 PERIODS OF DECAYING LIFE.

Once it was flood or fire which heaped the slain;
Again their weak, worn heart soon ceased to beat,
As wanting that quick spirit which inflamed
Their youth; disease and age cut short their life.
Then packed away in caskets fast entombed,
In solid rock, bleached bones or mummied flesh,
Lay resting in eternal sepulture.
Those generations past how quickly sped!
Ages swept by swift as the rolling spheres,
Time borrowed hours from everlasting days,
Years came and went, lost to our reckoning.

24 AFTER DESTRUCTION COMES MAN'S CREATION.

When man came striding on this cosmic stage,
He found his predecessors lulled to sleep,
A new-born race in solemn tragedy
Trod on the graves of their ancestral line.

With hopes and prospects blighted in the bud,
He waited with brave heart to act his part,
In this great theatre of tragic life.
His soul, divenely taught, born from the breath
Of Deity, aspired to grasp the lofty theme;
But travestied the spirit of the hour.
While chaos reigned dark Night stooped coldly down,
From ebon throne to spread her sable wings
Around this formless world, within whose void,
Rough matter lay in wild disorder strewn,
And God in mist and darkness shrouded, spoke,

CREATION OF WORLDS AND SPIRITS.

Then instantly from Nature's womb there sprang,
Ten thousand worlds which filled the heavenly space
With brilliant orbs, whose dazzling light clothed earth,
In robes of royal splendor.
God said: "Assemble ye supernal powers,"
When in a single instant heavenly hosts,
With countless millions of angelic bands,
Had traversed through the universal bounds,
And compassed those wide realms of spacious heaven.
Impersonating swift-winged messengers,
They told the message which was all Divine,
Then swifter than a flash of light, they came
With banners waving, ensigns high unfurled,
To stand before the presence of earth's King,
And listen to that voice which awes the world.

26 MAN'S CATASTROPHE, THE FALL.

The history of man since Adam's fall
Hath stained the page with blots of tears and blood.
Since Eve's temptation and man's fatal sin,
Sorrow and death have been the destined score,
Which filled the record of his diary.
Bathed in the sweat of Adam's curse,
Long hath he borne the burdens of earth's toil,
And tasted bitter food doled to mean slaves.
And while he fed on wormwood, thorns, and gall,
He quenched his thirst in streams from poison springs,
And quaffed his drink from cups full brimmed with woe.
Entangled in the mazes of this wild,
How quickly lost is he in life's dark woods,
Where every bush, and shrub, and forest tree
Conceals his visage in that sunlit cloud,
Which wraps his face in veil of mystery.

27 HEAVEN'S CURSE IS FELT.

Upon this smitten world grim shadows fall;
Storms gather round the earth, on shore and sea;
And tempests lower along each mountain crest,
While gloomy darkness spreads above the hills,
And covers with deep shade the fields and sky.
Behold the gathered throngs which come from far,
To hear the tramp of armies drawing near.
How can ye bide the thraldom of their chains,
And how resist the capture which they bring?

The mounting of that flood shall sweep the land;
The whelming of that tide drown all the race.
Swift speeds the time for spectral liaisons,
When ghosts flit by and apparations rise;
While spirits of the air stalk through the groves
To offer sacrifice on ancient tombs.

28 MEMENTO MORI.

When light grows dim in these extinguished eyes,
The shutters close the windows of this house,
And darkness broods where beauty once held sway.
The soul imprisoned in this clod of clay,
Emancipated flies to rest in space,
Where beams still shine with radiance all Divine.
Within that darkened chamber quite alone,
His pampered body sleeps in earth's decay,
Hampered with clods which crowd his narrow bed,
Sad spectacle for human pride to view.
Soon comes the hour for stillness when one fears
To stir the shutter in his silent room,
Lest he awake the sleeper from his dreams
Of blest elysium.

29 SPIRITS ABOVE AND HOVERING AROUND.

Man's counterpart
In spirituelle hovers round this sphere,
Crowding earth's caverns with light, dusky forms,
Whose silver wings outspread in graceful flight,

Bear bodies of thin shade across the deep,
To vales and dells and woodland solitudes,
Which stay forefended and enshrined in shrouds
Of twilight's deep obscurity and gloom.
How sullen seems the day when thievish clouds,
Have robbed the sun of glory and have strewn
The pathway of his beams with vapor shades,
That strayed from dismal night; The world how dark,
When tints of pale and ashen grey conceal
The azure sky, the fleece of snow-flakes lines,
The broad expanse of air while veils enshroud
The lofty vault of heaven. How dreary looks
This earth when fall the sere, frostbitten leaves,
When bleak winds howl among the nutbrown hills,
But worse than cloudy day or stormy night,
More gloomy than the icy atmosphere,
The frozen land or the tempestuous sea,
Is that poor human heart that feels so sad,
Amidst these doleful scenes where man must bend
In sorrow under griefs which oft bedew
His eyes and swell the fountain of his tears.

30 A BEACON STANDS ON THE SHORE.

Bards live forever in immortal verse.
When worlds grow old, the hoary locks
Of Time in dappled grey float through the mist,
Which ages spread above the storms of earth;
But famous words survive the shattered wreck

Of sublunary spheres.
While Time's rude billows crowned with crested waves,
Roll back their burdens on the banks and shoals,
From life's tempestuous sea; upon the shore
Still shines the beacon light which circles round,
On that revolving shaft in yonder tower.
How many goodly keels that plough the main,
Plunge wreathed in foaming garlands through the sea.

31 MAN IS CREATION'S CROWN.

Inconstant man now fixed like central sun,
Then changeful as the waxing, waning moon,
Shifting as springtime or the fickle wind,
Else moodful like the ebbing, flowing tide,
Which in its motion chases both those orbs,
The king of day and queen of murky night.
Mankind stands honored as creation's crown,
Adam and Eve are God's chief handiwork,
His last and topmost gift which He bestows
Upon this lustrous world; no other work,
E'er challenges comparison with His,
Endowed with chivalry and valor, man
Displays his prudence by wise self-control.

32 WOMAN ADORNS THE WORLD.

Chaste modesty and virtue woman claims,
Two precious jewels which she nobly guards,
With ever vigilant and jealous care.

These gems she wears upon a snow-white breast,
To ornament the beauty of her form,
To teach her children how queen mothers sway,
And through like office, win her husband's love.
Since Adam's grave catastrophe, the fall,
Throughout the world wherever man may tread,
Some ignis fatuus oft leads him on;
He still pursues some phantom of the mind,
Or vainly threads the devious pathway through
Those wilds which lead to darker forest depths,
Where weary pilgrims stumble blindly on,
And lose their way bereft of friendly guide.

33 MAN ENDOWED WITH REASON, FAITH AND LOVE.

Soul, spirit, life, which animate this clay,
Form that distinctive feature which enrols
The human creature in the rank of gods,
And on Divine escutcheons stamps his seal,
Those rare endowments, reason, faith and love,
The richest brilliants in man's tripple crown
Sparkle like lustrous diadems of kings.
By reason we discover noble form,
And beauteous order in God's universe;
By faith we trace religion's holy path,
And reach heaven's throne by climbing steps
Upon the ladder of Christ's boundless love.

34 THE PRODUCTIVE EARTH.

Look how the fruitful earth with affluent ease
Brings forth in swarms, from her parturient womb,
These countless myriads of infant sons,
That with deep mouths like Rachel's tender babes,
Suck nutriment from bosoms round and full.
This nurse is ours; and from her pregnant dust
Mankind was born; plant, shrub, and stately tree
Grow from her fertile soil; fish, bird, and beast
Feed on the products which she kindly yields,
To love's embraces, and soft dalliance,
With that warm kiss which on her cheek is pressed
By her bold lusty paramour, the sun.

35 EARTH'S BRIARS, THORNS AND POISON.

O tell us why it is that thou fair Earth,
The mother of us all, supplying food,
Must mingle gall and wormwood with our drink?
Why should breast-nipples from whose fountains flow
These copious streams of honey, milk and cream
Pour forth the hidden poison which must kill
The child that greets thee with his filial love?
And why amidst the roses dost thou plant
The briar and thorn to tear thy children's flesh,
And cause them agony? O horrid Sin,
This is the baneful curse which thou hast wrought.
'Tis thou that dost with melting dews distil

The pestilent miasmas which arise
From fields and meadows, boggy fens and moors.
Breathing foul vapor's of salacious cots,
Dost thou hold converse with the pale, sick moon,
And challenge shadows in thy colloquy?
Then shift thy title with a cockscomb's fool,
For thou art daft and mightst array thyself,
In poor Tom's manacles.

36 YOUTH COMES TO AGE AND TO DEATH.

Youths sport in boyhood and indulge frisk moods,
Like prancing colts curvetting as they chase
Through verdant pastures wet with glistening dew.
A scintillation plucked from Heavenly fire,
Lights up this human clod of mortal clay,
Sparkles in this bright age and trickles through
The blood; till all too soon life's flame is quenched,
The lamp grows dark in chambers of his soul,
Deposits sacredly embalmed with care,
Seek rest from toil within earth's hallowed urn,
Then snugly wrapped the dust returns to dust,
Man's spirit, back to greet his Maker, flies.
And were it not for hidden hands revealed,
Which minister invisibly to souls
Darkened through dire distress and agony,
Our luckless lot would glean no hope to stem
The torrent's flood when storms of trial lower.

37 THE LAST DISMISSAL.

Bold tars that sail upon the restless main,
Soldiers who fight where bullets thickly fly,
All yield obedience to fate's decree,
And fall beneath the stroke which cuts men down.
O that the everlasting hills might hold
These forms empaled in some vast solitude,
Where we for ages must defy the storm,
As firm and strong as snow-clad mountains stand,
Long waiting with supernal silence crowned.
The soul lies bound within these dungeon-chains;
While death releasing sets the prisoner free;
He grants a furlough to each wounded brave,
Bids him go home to greet his wife and babes,
That on their cheek and forehead he may press,
The tokens of his love; this king bestows
On captured convicts pardon or reprieve.

38 THE TRAGEDY ENDS.

While death, akin to sleep, his own twin-brother,
Stops short the beating heart, and soothes the brain,
He wraps the corse with cerements cold and stark,
Seals close these lids, these curtains of our eyes,
And opens wide that world invisible,
On this world's stage, Time acts his tragedy.
Ten million figures enter on the scene,
Which come and go obedient to his will,
That do his bidding, then pass through the door,

And disappear, their forms are seen no more;
The voice that spoke before so loud is hushed,
Then silence reigns supreme for one full hour,
Until the actors in the tragic play
Present their formal bow upon life's stage,
When each in turn drops out, the curtain falls,
The joy of day descends to gloomy night.

39 THE VARIED GATEWAYS OF DEPARTURE.

Some through the fever's burning blaze conduct
Their exit while the brain doth suffer most
From heat of wild delirium. Some die
By lightning's stroke, by whirlwind's reckless rage,
In anarchy of untamed elements,
By shock of earthquake licensed to destroy.
Or buried like Atlantis deep at sea,
Engulfed in Neptune's overwhelming flood,
Man sinks to rest beneath old ocean's tide.
Clothed in habiliments of sombre hue
Proud Destiny strides forth o'er nature's field,
To view the realm of Death's vast monarchy.
Where clashing sabres, bright as lightning's flash,
Throw off their sparks of steel.

40 DEATH LACKS NO RESOURCE.

Fate stalks abroad,
Through earthly courts with martial pace to gaze
In wonder at this bloody spectacle;

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Or mounted on his charger spurs his steed,
That he may witness how the sons of Mars
Heap sacrificial offerings on the shrine,
To that dread god of war who treasures blood,
A precious relic, rare in costly worth,
For his rich armory.
Beneath the crumbling walls of palaces,
Where newts and lizards crawl and serpents hiss,
In ancient Thebes, Hyperion gazing stood,
Questing mysterious signs in azure sky,
While croaking ravens harried all the plain,
Those hundred gates, at Memnon's high command
Fly open wide struck by magician's wand.

41 EVERY LAND FURNISHED FOR SEPULTURE.

The pomp and pageantry of Mizraim,
Float down the turbid waters of the Nile,
Where Cleopatra captured Antony,
In Egypt's royal bowers; her monstrous Sphinx
Surveys Sahara's arid plain with pride,
Majestic Ghizeh towers to reach the sky,
That spacious urn for sacred dust of kings,
Where urodela crawl o'er Pharaoh's bones,
In whose sarcophagi the mummies rest.
These splendid mausoleums, ancient, grand
Imperishable monuments, portents

Of empire's swift decay hold dynasties
Of Ramases and Ptolemy embalmed,
Within their charnel vault, sepulchral home.

42 EGYPT HAS MONUMENTAL SEPULCHRES.

Thou childless Mother of lost ancient arts,
Whose widowed Fame looks down from towering heights
Of lofty pyramids where millions sleep,
In silence craving shelter at their base,
"Sweep with thy besom time's grand works away.
Fling to the wind thy fears," Serapis said,
"Though woman born go forth stout-hearted swain,
Await thy doom amidst the weired dun wilds,
Where fiends plot mischief paltering with thy trust,
With frauds deceiving when thy sense is palled."
There Imhotep for science famed commends
The worship of bright Isis or pale Khuns,

43 HOARY EGYPT RENOWNED FOR KINGS.

The queen Candace there at ease reclines,
On soft divans in lofty palaces,
Where Dido's city Carthage rears her towers,
Upon the banks of Egypt's placid Nile,
She rides majestic borne in palanquin,
By servile eunuchs of black Ethiop's race,
Amid the crowds whose humming voices thrill,
As the wild croak of woodland loons in fright,
Casts dread through dank and dismal realms of night.

Gaze toward the heavens and watch that southern star,
Where shines Acherner in Eridanus,
Who would not love a country such as this,
Where beauty dwells and glory decks the sky,
When patriots slay tyrants, they bequeath
Fortunes to freedom, to their land, their swords.

44 DEVOTION IN HER TEMPLES.

The chaplet which adorns the hero's brow,
Inspires the world with envy of his fame,
He never suffered drum to call retreat,
But oft horns sounded parley or chamade.
The turgid breast which swells with native pride,
When sons return with war's victorious spoils,
Stints not to speak the praise which valor earns,
While songs of gratitude ascend to heaven.
To Heaven our earliest orisons are due,
Our latest and our best devotions rise,
Within the sacred temple of the heart,—
More holy than the shrine where Janus reigns,
Or Odin claims the homage of man's soul,
On monumental mounds of earth and stone.

45 MONKS CLOISTERED IN CELLS.

The Abelite in sunny Afric's clime,
With vows austere dwelt in his hermitage;
Recluse from all indulgence he pursued
Ascetic meditations; while he sighed

In lonely solitude. The imps of hell
Could never lure him through those crooked snares,
Which Satan spreads to catch our wayward feet.
Though cowls of monks and stoutest convent walls
Serve not to check the ingress of base thoughts,
Nor thwart the darkest deeds of inborn sin,
Which ferret underneath the pillared domes
Of clustered spires and arch of cloistered cells.
Oft times these serve to shut the devil in.
The tempter boldly plies his secret arts,
Within dark chambers, in the halls of kings.

46 THE OUTCAST AND PILGRIM.

The wretched and the outcast, struggling on,
Still valiant fighting with dread want and woe,
Confronts a foeman worth his costly steel,
In lonely wilds near borders of the deep.
When in dark caverns by the angry flood,
Wild as the Algerine or blackamoor,
He battles for life's meed, for sorrow's balm;
While pangs of hunger gnawing at the heart,
Are slowly wearing his weak life away,
Soft beams of starlight scatter rays of joy
Along the pilgrim's path in solitude.
Though justly he had earned earth's fame he shrinks
To own the merit he had deftly won;
Too modest to endure life's blaze of glory,
Which sorely pained and dazzled his blear eyes.

47 SERVANTS SENSITIVE TO SUFFERING.

The most abject, the lowliest of mankind,
Can feel the smart from cruel injury,
As keenly as the lord who fain inscribes,
Armorial ensigns in baronial halls,
On proud escutcheons or Escurial thrones.
Can drugs empirical release his pain,
Who suffers agony from crushing straits?
In vain we strive to comfort and relieve,
With cups of charneco, the slaves oppressed.

48 TO THE CHILD OF MISFORTUNE.

Toil on, brave Soul, till eve shall bring thee rest,
Endure the martyr's thorn which wins thy crown,
Toil on, the day is sinking toward the West,
Thy task is almost done, the sun goes down.
Hope speaks good cheer; though weary, worn and faint,
Speed to thy home, night's mantle soon will fall,
Hard struggle with the world equips the saint,
Sleep seals thine eyes, while craving death's dark pall.

49 FREEDOM FROM CARE AND SORROW.

In boyhood ere the cares and sorrows come,
The youth disports himself with play and toys,
As happy as the blue-bird or the lark,
That chirrups through the day on hawthorn bush,
That soars a licensed libertine in song,
Born wild and free and twitters on the bough.

The maid unsheltered from the boisterous wind,
Who airs her beauty 'neath the silent moon,
Outwatches heaven's bright orbs in duty's sphere,
Protected by night's spangled canopy.
The matron praying o'er her nursling babe,
Begs her patronal saint for kindly care,
Imprints her kiss upon that infant's brow,
Then falls asleep within the land of dreams.

50 DREARY LIFE OF MISFORTUNE.

Bereft of fame and fortune in despair,
Like ancient Job who lives in Holy Writ,
How many a luckless wight toils on through life,
And finds no ease this side the gates of death,
Until he lays his earthly burdens down,
To sleep, poor soul, in silence and the grave.
These grovel through the darkness of the night;
For such the day drags gloomily along,
Life spreads a wintry scene where cold winds blow
And icy mantles hide the nut-brown hills;
The grey and sombre sky o'erhangs the earth,
The trees stand bare, and no green leaf appears,
No bird to cheer man with a song of spring,
There's not a flower, nor tender blade of grass,
Where nature's verdure withers, nipped with frost.
In life's great battle who foretells our fate?
Early or late the stoutest heart must quail.
The field is bloody; many wounded, slain,

Lie in deep trenches; still the missiles fly;
Brave men drop down; when night shuts in the scene
The volleys cease; the air grows still as death.

51 CHANGES AND DECAY WROUGHT BY TIME.

The ancient goddess long ago dethroned,
Shattered to dust by time's iconoclast,
Royal Minerva never more shall reign;
Her bust was dashed to earth like mouldered clay,
The wreath of leaves which crowned her brow is lost,
True emblem of this perishable world.
Many patronal arts died with their queen,
Whose moral teaches this suggested thought,
That it is man's sure destiny to die.
Swift as the flight of thoughts the moments glide,
While dials mark their speed, count and record
Their number by the ticking of the clock,
Man's life they measure by the beating pulse,
Each throb comes nearer to the last, until
The heart grows weary yearning for its rest,
Pauses awhile, then flutters and is still.
Then round his bier, the teardrops sadly fall,
Above him spreads the black and mournful pall;
The solemn dirge is sung beside his grave,
'Neath whose dark portal he is gently laid.
Sculptured on monumental sepulchres,
Man stooping with infirmity of years,

Holds his rude cane and stands in effigy,
Stiff as the knee-joints of the aged oak,
Which gnarled and knotted crowns yon ancient hill,
While he defies the power of wintry winds.

52 AMBITION VERSUS MODESTY.

The longest pilgrimage on earth employed,
In deep researches after hidden truth,
Affords no fit occasion to learn all.
Treasures of wisdom which man ought to seek,
Lie buried in the depths he cannot find;
And after his first lessons on life's page,
He leaves school ere its rudiments are learned.
Though long enough to find out other's faults,
He seldom lives till time to know his own.
To poise a stupid braggart with a fool,
And weigh the difference of worth, requires
A finer balance than the druggist's scales.
'Tis true that in the heraldry of fools,
'Tis higher honor to be called a dolt,
Than with the king's sword to be dubbed a knight,
Yea, even of the order of the garter.
No leaden plummet can sink far enough
To fathom man's deep ignorance and pride,
While sages fond of knowledge dare not boast,
The fools by knowing everything seem fools.
Striving, O Man, to reach the topmost round
Of glory's ladder leaning on the sky,

Fling to the winds ambition to appear
Greater or wiser than the deed approves.
The mettle of the simpleton is tried,
His knighthood tested and his laurels won,
By fighting with a hornet's nest awhile,
After contending with a swarm of bees.
Humanity denies that man is faultless;
Ample is proof that he is nothing worth,
If not censorious: it goes without
Our saying that he needs must fail in life.
Should he neglect through pomp and circumstance
To place a modest value on himself.
The minimum of self-esteem and love,
Invulnerable to shafts of criticism,
Will save him many a shock and many a tear.
It blunts the edge of satire and of wit,
To dub each idle boaster a dumb ass;
But truth must out e'en at the risk of life.
Too tame, humiliating, spiritless,
Is it? It is the balm which heals each wound,
That envy makes in every human heart,
When fires of jealousy most briskly burn.
This balsam, modesty, has power to cure
Heart-burnings when inflicted by man's scorn,
By ridicule and overweening pride.
But when the bugle summons one to arms
Against a valiant though a mortal foe,

'Tis brave to lay his meekness far aside,
And bristle with heroic show of spears.

53 AN OASIS IN THE DESERT OF LIFE'S PILGRIMAGE.

Pavilions stand midst cedars of the grove,
Where one can strew his litter with coarse straw,
And sleep as soundly on his bed of thatch,
As any prince on couch of ivory,
In splendid hall, or palace of a king.
Fair nature's bounty with rich largess fills,
The cup from which lean poverty may drain,
The draught with keener zest than wealth bestows.
Within some idle wild one may beguile an hour,
With loitering footsteps through meandering path,
With noiseless tread beneath the spreading oaks,
And saunter to some spot of grateful shade,
Where sylphs recline upon the mossy bank
Of that cool stream which gurgling flows along,
O'er bed of pebbles towards the deep-delved bay.
The book lies open to his wondering eyes,
That he may read the pages of grey lore
Inscribed with magic pen on fossil rocks,
Or sculptured in bold outline on the hills,
Or else in figures clear and legible,
Portrayed and drawn with artist's skill in flowers,
Or delicately pencilled in green leaves.

54 GOD WILL TRANSFORM.

He that can still the tempest with His word,
Who used to call forth worlds with vocal breath,
To stretch the bow which spans the sunlit cloud,
With radiant tints; He that can smite the earth
With a magician's wand,—He will transform
Deformity to beauty and disease
To health; and this same mighty Talisman
Will smooth the rough and rugged path of toil,
Along the confines of life's pilgrimage.

55 MAN'S TERRESTRIAL MONARCHY ABRIDGED.

This goodly world with earth's vast wealth is ours,
Ours are its grassy hills and sunlit skies,
And ours at night the star-bespangled heavens.
As o'er his realm each potentate presides,
Man sways his sceptre with a royal grace,
He strides the waves upon the flood of glory,
And wears his crown in fashion of a king,
While this proud sovereign rules in equity,
And loyal nations own allegiance due,
What power shall hurl man from life's citadel,
What law depose him from his rightful throne?
None but the world's prince, that dread conqueror,
Whose name is Death. This incubus with fright
Conspires to add fell terror to the night.

With quivers of barbed arrows crowded full,
And shoulders bared on hostile raid intent,
He gropes like blear-eyed Melancholy's ghost,
Beneath the arches of this pillared dome.

56 THE FLIGHT OF SOULS TOWARD HEAVEN.

Of that dark stream once traversed by each soul,
Which comes not back again, what spirit lives,
That can inspire the courage or supply
The strength to ford the river we call death?
O could these mortal eyes with clouded sight,
Behold the vision of ascending souls,
When they expand their wings for upward flight.
Borne on the cloud of angel companies,
Through heaven's ethereal realms beyond the stars.
We'd feel no doubt the rapture of delight,
In view of august scenes in heights sublime;
After all this how small these worlds appear;
And earthly sorrows dwindle into nought,
Or insignificant and petty mites.

THIRD DUAN

HYPOCRISY IN SHADES OF DOUBT AND FEAR.

The man who fosters an ambitious pride
In this world's pantomine to play a part,
In double character of saint and knave,
And to amuse spectators who applaud
The skill of his impersonation's art,
Will tremble when he meets the angry frown
Of that imperious Judge, whose scrutiny
Sinks deeper than the outward act, and weighs
The motives of his heart. O droughty earth,
Wilt thou permit thy sons to wet thy fields,
And fertilize thy soil with drowning tears?
These drops of dew so plentifully flow,
That no drosometer can sound their depth,
Or compass half the measure of their flood.
There is a Spirit that can tame the sea,
And chain his billows to the rockbound shore,
Subdue the wind and fetter earth's wild storms.
'Tis He that rides upon the vaulted sky,
In chariot of clouds when He descends,
With beams of brilliant light to lend His smile
To this fair world.
Robed in the shades of heaven's refulgent light,
Man's spirit 'scapes to yonder drear abode,

Within whose closure fallen angels dwell,
With Satan as their master and their king.
In bold defiance of His royal power,
Who holds them spellbound in hell's awful cage;
Or else escorted on the wind-swept cloud,
He wings his flight to regions far beyond
The circle of Orion's belt to reach,
Celestial Portals, mansions of the blest,
Which like the gates of morning ope to greet
The cheerful light of heaven's eternal day.

2 CHURCH DEFECTION, THE MOST FATAL FALL.

The wretch who spends his life in hungry want,
And abject penury may win that prize,
Which Dives in his greed for sordid gain
Will fail to grasp.
When the cold wind of winter shifts around,
Untimely cheating seasons in their prime,
Chilling the dews of spring to biting frost,
That nips the buds and blossoms on the downs,
And strips both shrub and tree quite bare of leaves.
'Tis sad to see the desolation spread,
O'er nature's face which turns as pale as death.
When angels from the heights of glory fall
Down, down, still down until they reach,
The bottomless abyss and there remain,
Forever far beyond the bounds of hope,

As when bright constellations fade away,
From heaven's starry host—this seems but nought,
Beside that sad dark scene when we behold
The bride of Christ, a spotless virgin, pure
As chaste, unsullied, white as lilies look,
Kissed by clear waters in the sparkling brooks,
Defiled, to virtue lost, and false to Heaven.

3 THE SEDUCER'S SIN.

Then sorrow melts the world to grievous tears,
Galore of pity bursts the timid heart;
Then wild goes up from earth the wailing cry;
That meteor flashed above and rent the air,
But sank beneath the darkness of the night.
How vile the wretch who plans a maiden's fall,
Villain accursed who paints her cheek with shame.
With lust the debauchee invades the fold,
And from his neighbor's bosom steals the lamb;
He snaps asunder wedlock's dearest ties,
Gloats in his triumph over virtue's strength,
Acquits himself a chief in ruin's work,
In blasting most sweet hopes of happy homes.

4 THE ERRING WIFE.

The stranger flatters with enticing words,
With gestures lewd and soft coquettish smile.
We know not which commands the greater scorn,
The bawd who tempts or she who weakly yields

To blandishments of poison tongues which sting
With deadly thrust. Her husband swore she loved.
He seemed her paragon who wooed her hand,
With goodly gifts of jewels rich and rare,
With philters, and love potions mixed with care,
All steeped in catanance's charming drug.
But she, base ingrate, mocks his trustful hopes,
And ridicules the cowering cuckold's horns.
Pity for men who feel the tyrant touch
Of human frailty oft constrains the heart,
To look through false prosceniums on the stage,
Where actor's test earth's histrionic art,
And play dramatic tragedies in life.

5 THE THORNY PATH TO HEAVEN.

On earth there is no respite to man's toil,
And at the end his doom lacks Heaven's reprieve.
From puling childhood to decrepid age,
Engrossed in business or absorbed in care,
Man struggles with his lot suffused in tears,
Shekels of silver and of gold he wins,
But meets scant sympathy, or hope, or joy.
Along life's toilsome road he travels fast;
The steep and weary way fatigues his soul;
Bedewed with sweat and choked with flying dust,
Footsore and crippled on the rough, hard path,
Fainting with heat he braves the torrid sun,
At noonday pausing not to quench his thirst.

Merciful Heaven, strike and redress his wrongs;
Aid him to reach betimes his journey's end.
Make smooth the road where now he climbs the hill,
And gently lead him upward towards the goal,
And so at last when he shall mount the top,
When he shall stand before the wicket gate,
Pray wilt Thou open wide the great bronze door,
That he in peace may rest in that grand hall
Where all the fathers sleep.

6 TERRORS OF THE BOTTOMLESS PIT.

Besmeared with pitch in ovens of live coals,
Hell sounds like crackling oceans of hot flame.
Amidst the noise and shouts of revelry,
We hear the fiendish laugh in mockful scorn,
The song of bachanals with lute and harp,
Eftsoons the piercing shriek and painful yell
Of souls in torment in confines of hell,
While worlds are blazing in wild brimstone fires.
With such a stare do demons gaze withal,
That human spirits dare not meet their glance,
But drop their eyes as cowards meekly quail.
There is no storm so rude, nor sky so dark,
But daylight breaks through clouds of blackest hue;
So through the murky mist of doubt and death,
Man's life elicits sunshine from bright heavens,
Which canopy his head and cheer his heart.

7 NO ANODYNES FOR THE SOUL.

The clew which leads through labarynths of earth,
Exhibits vistas on the heights beyond,
Where golden sceptres, diamond crowns of kings,
Adorn bold knights in castle halls immured.
O when shall we forsake these everglades,
And wing our flight through broad expanse of air,
To those fair hills and fields forever green!
When through this world each pilgrim plods his way,
Though clad in mail and panoply of steel,
What power, from lightning's stroke and stormy blast,
Shall shield his head with armored carapace.
Inured to pain without narcotic drugs,
We crave no soporific anodyne,
No coca wine, nepenthe, Indian hemp,
No juices mingled by some haggard witch,
Nor ether fumes, nor smoke of poppy leaves,
Shall calm our senses in oblivion.

8 SORROW THRIVES WITH SIN.

Spurn we alike the hangman's cord or else
The cup of poison, or the dagger's point,
With which the suicide oft ends his grief,
And soothes the throbbings of his maniac brain,
In dreamless sleep and Lethe's cold embrace.
Death terminates the worst of human ills,
And grants a period to all our woes;
Our benefactor can bestow no more.

The Sovereign of the universe Himself,
May blast the thorn, or cut the thistle down,
Or nip their saplings ere they bud or bloom;
But sin and sorrow, plants of earthly soil,
So rooted are, luxuriant in growth,
That they outlive the tempest's fierce assault,
And equally survive the summer's drought,
The overwhelming flood, and winter's cold.

9 THE EARTH IS MOTHER; GOD IS FATHER.

Within rich realms of fantasy, when we
Behold the wild woods dusky with the crowds
Of oreads that fill the gloomy space,
Of mountain crevices and caves, how oft
The pensive thoughts, the fears depress the soul,
Or else bestir the heart to quicker pulse,
Sensations wrought by an imperious power.
Earth's motherhood, God's fatherhood combine,
The one to furnish flesh, the other soul;
The former to supply this corporal frame
With substance tangible to mortal sense,
The latter to endow these forms with mind,
With animated spirit, quick for thought.

10 THE SOUL'S APPEAL.

Ah, what appeal can reach the limpid sky,
Or gain the ear of Deity? What cry
Of burdened and oppressed humanity,

Can waken motions in that heart Divine,
To bring release to souls in agony?
Who else can quell the socialistic pang,
That hovers with the murderer's deadly bane,
Around the throne of kings to spoil their peace?
Time, arrant thief, steals this brief life away;
Swift as a river flows this stream along,
Stays not one moment on the shelving bank,
But through earth's rocky channel chafes its course;
Till yon vast sea shall dam it up with tides.

11 BRAVE BE THY LIFE.

Be calm and bide thy time, my soul, be calm,
And fight till life's great battle shall be won.
Let us so use swift moments which speed by,
That passing hours shall bid benign adieus,
Rather than pierce us with keen Parthian blades.
Since man first crept into this breathing world,
Baffled by fortune through fate's stern decree,
The angry storm beats on, the wild winds rave,
Driving life's billows 'gainst earth's rocky shore.
How oft our thoughts are kindled by the blaze,
Of things suppositious, false, or vain,
When apparitions of unearthly scenes,
Affright the mind, else dormant or morose.

12 BOLD SPIRITS STALK ABROAD.

In black Cimmerian darkness of the night,
When all the stars are hidden with deep clouds,

Grotesque and ghostly forms all through the air,
Strive to evade our sight; bold spirits move,
All earthborn creatures shuddering hide their heads,
In some dark cave where wild life dares not stir;
Or curse their fate beneath some shelving rock,
Such dreadful shock suits with this dismal time.
The ghastly spectres hovering near earth's bounds,
Brood of infernal shapes with aspect dire,
Crowd through etherial space with hostile threats.
They point with fingers of death's skeleton
Yclad in sinews towards their drear abode,
And with grim visage beck us thither turn.

13 SUCCOUR IN TEMPTATION.

"O come" quoth one, "ye denizens of earth,
Come ye along where savory pottage boils,
And seething caldrons hiss above the fires,
And our weird sisters hang the crooked crane,
With spitted flesh, and greet their guests with smiles:
Draughts of refreshing ale shall quench your thirst."
When thus the fiend had tempted Eve's fair sons,
An angel from the heights of glory dropped,
With outspread wings from realms of Paradise,
Whose footprint light as air touched earth's dun soil.
"O come with me" saith Michael, "to that land,
Where flowers perennial never cease to bloom,
The land of spreading palms and shady groves,
Where grows the wholesome olive and rich vine."

Just then the clamorous fiends with horrid yell,
Seize on their timorous prey in gluttonous greed,
And clamber through the charnel vaults of tombs,
Tearing each viscid cerement from earth's slain.
The spirits vanish; but though hid from sight,
We hear unearthly sounds like clanking chains,
Which bind their victims while the captives swoon.
Then such a dream seized on this vital flesh,
That frigid horror stood aghast with fear,
When kindlings of dry fagots burn so bright.
Contrast his mind with One who is so wise,
That in His book there's not a word to blot,

14 FROM SMALL ATOMS, GREAT THINGS GROW.

There is an eye which never sleeps, an arm
Unwearied through the ages strikes its blows,
So strong that day or night it needs no rest.
Imprisoned in the walls of the acorn's shell,
Lies the hidden embryo of the mighty oak,
Wrapt in the swadling bands of th' infant's form,
Behold those prodigies of future strength
And valor equal to a giant's power.
Who could believe that Caesar, puling babe,
Could grow to be so great in man's esteem;
That he must be enrolled with ancient kings,
Whose statues stand among the gods of Rome?
Shrouded in mystery aloft they dwell;

The halo crowns them with a sacred awe,
On their proud pedestal they firmly rest,
Safe from vicissitude, while nations fall.
Their names are graved on Memory's titled page,
Inscribed in tablets of enduring bronze;
They live immortal on the list of fame;
Their glory lingers round their shapeless dust.

15 THE LEGIBLE ROLL.

But yesterday the slightest gash would cut some vein,
And blood come spurting from the artery's wound;
Life would flow out from thrust of dagger's point,
Through mouths no bigger than a bodkin's eye.
Leaves from the book of nature have I brought
To thee, O Man, taught in God's school of arts;
There findst thou written legibly a scroll,
In characters of gold if thou canst read
The hieroglyph inscriptions on the walls,
Of ancient palaces where figured lines
Significant, mysterious, portray the night.
When Buto spreads dark curtains round the sky
Butiris bathes in waters of the Erne.

16 THE AGED NESTOR.

Gaze through the shades of midnight's deepest cave,
From darkened windows into space unveiled.
Dost thou behold that spectre like a ghost,
Masked in the gloom of Erebus spellbound?

So peers the aged Nestor through the film,
Which shuts his vision from this nether world.
When his long day draws to its solemn close,
And night evolves in shadows grim and gray;
Sadly he lingers at the silent porch,
Whose portals open into sable rooms.
While recollections of his youthful days,
Flash through the darkest chambers of his soul,
Keep silence, child, and listen to this sage;
Softly he whispers to attentive ears.

17 NESTOR SPEAKS THUS TO ELIZA.

"Now eighty winters with their snow-white frost,
Have blanched this beard upon my pallid cheek,
With careworn wrinkles have these features strewn,
And ploughed long furrows in my pensive brow.
These scattered locks, this hoary head else bald,
Are all that's left to tell my soul's deep woe.
This withered, shapeless form so bent with age,
These stooping shoulders, shrivelled legs and arms,
Supported by my staff, by crutches staid,
Remind me that the end of life is near.
I can not see, feel, hear, or smell, or taste,
My toothless gums can scarce one morsel bite,
And my spent vigor leaves me in decay,
Bids me through this dark world to grope my way,
With hope await my coming avatar.
O when will care and painful suffering cease,

How soon will death set this bound captive free,
And soothe the sharp sting in these aching limbs."

18 ELIZA TAKES UP THE DIALOGUE.

The old man rested from the toil of speech,
And leaned for help upon his daughter's arm,
For he was not alone although he deemed
His sad complaint, a last soliloquy;
But round him stood his children, wife and friends.
He might scarce hear their sobs or see their tears.
Among them was Eliza, tall and fair,
The damask roses blushed upon her cheek,
And she was kind and goodly to the swain,
Whose arm was gently offered to her hand,—
A willing favor gained by modest wish;
She to her grandsire thus addressed these words.
"Pray pardon, aged sire, our questionings.
We beg thee tell us of those younger days,
What perils thou hast seen, what maxims tried,
What dangers thou hast braved along the road,
Which leads up to the summit of that hill,
Whose steep declivity brings thee at last,
Down to this mountain's base; what clouds and storms
Have swept across the sky to block thy way,
Since thy farewell to the dewy morn of life,
Till thou hast reached the sombre close of day."

19 NESTOR.

Thus in reply the aged Nestor speaks:
"Such deeds so wondrous have I witnessed here,
No language can describe, heard thoughtful words
So rare, my weak tongue fails to compass them;
The tide of thought rebounds upon my soul,
As overwhelming as Niagara,
Whose wild swift waters, with their ceaseless roar,
An august spectacle of grandeur, flow
Down that steep precipice, in awful rage.
But you mistake, fair maid, 'twas not my fate
To stand a target in the deadly breach,
And bravely gaze into the cannon's mouth,
Where serried ranks of patriot soldiers fall.
Nor has this frame sought idleness and ease
In marble palaces and banquet halls,
With diamond rings on velvet cushions pressed.
In life's great drama I have played my part,
On this last act the curtain soon will fall.
In earth's grand battle I have carried arms,
Where the bugle note has never called retreat;
It summons now to lay my armor down.
While Dis awaits upon the shore of styx,
To ferry souls across the river there.
A voice invites me soon to join the throng,
Of jubilant exiles from fatherland,
Who dwell in walled towers on Quirinal hill,

Where stands the Parthenon midst halls on high.
Land of the fig, the olive and the vine,
How thy fair meadows in rich verdure clad,
Draw my swift feet to tread thy sunny glades.
Upon this pedestal of shifting scenes,
A man surveys the verge of this world's brink,
To weigh its worth and learn its emptiness.
The majesty of empire, pomp of kings,
And all the glory wealth and wisdom bring,
Are worthless toys which crumble and decay
Amidst the wreck and ruthless crash of worlds."
With so much force of feeling did he speak,
That Nestor must needs pause awhile for breath.

20 ELIZA.

Eliza moved by subtle sympathy,
Replied in terms of courtesy and said:
"'Tis pity thus to fret and worry thee;
But prying tongues oft scorn Discretion's chains,
The fountain of perpetual youth lies hid,
In some dark cave of earth yet unexplored,
Beyond the ken of mortals. Wilt thou tell
How life can be preserved to hoary age,
Or give some history of thee and thine?"

21 NESTOR.

Then Nestor thus commenced his narrative:
"As sweet as vestal virgin, my good wife,

For forty years retained her beauty, youth,
Her husband's warm affection, confidence,
And I loved her as no swain else could love.
While I her spouse remained as temperate,
As Jonathan whose tribe abstained from wine,
From whom descended sons of Rechab's line.
Platonic love in married life secures
Perfection in the realm of social bliss.
'It is not good for man to be alone'.
Marriage is honorable in all mankind,
Yet only if his bed be undefiled.
But when his monster guest in greed of lust,
Feasts on the pet ewe lamb, brought up with care,
What hand shall strike the ruthless villain down,
What power repair the loss of wedded love,
Which finds no remedy short of the grave?
Before Jehovah 'tis the truth I vouch,
That secret ruin dwells in ogling eyes.
When wife or husband sports with fair soft palms,
There's many a home lies shattered in the wreck."
In this last apothegm the aged man,
Exhausted all his strength and paused again,
A fact suggestive that he told no dream.

22 NESTOR.

But after some brief rest he thus resumes:
"For years preceding times of chivalry,
Man trends to worship woman with his gifts,

As Moslem pilgrims tramp to Mecca's shrine;
She deigns to bend her downward glance at him,
And kindly lends her ear to his appeal,
While devotees lie prostrate at her feet.
But Jealousy, the thief who steals our sleep,
And robs mankind of all their sweetest joy,
Stalks through our chamber like unwelcome ghost,
And turns dark night to dungeon's hideous gloom.
The suicide would drown himself in blood,
Rather than live thus, wade in his own gore.
Say what can be more charming than the vow,
Witnessed by Heaven, before God's altar sworn,
When some fair maiden pledges man her troth,
In answer to the question of the priest,
Looks in her husband's face and speaks, 'I will'.
He suffered hardships to obtain her hand,
He plodded through the trackless wilderness,
No guide or lantern helped him find the way,
The lightning flashing from an angry sky,
Supplied the torch which kindled up the gloom,
But love's kind wishes ever cheered him on.
He owns her beauty at the bridal shrine,
Salutes her cheek with sweets of wedded bliss."

23 ELIZA.

Eliza's quick perception of fit words,
Drew her still closer to her lover's side.
Her modest woman's heart with sprigtly pulse,

Mantled her cheek with crimson blush of joy.
She said in answer to her grandsire's speech:
"Thy beetling brows which cover wisdom's shrine,
Bespeak for thee a listening multitude,
Who would dread deafness as Heaven's direst curse.
This land, the urn which holds the gathered dust
Of million tribes who claimed ancestral homes,
On hills, in valleys, close by flowing streams,
This land the glory and the pride of man,
Bears on her bosom vast and priceless stores,
And treasures, gold and gems by misers prized;
But gardens, orchards, richest mints and mines,
The proudest palaces, the grandest domes;
Contain no peer to share distinctive rank
With wisdom, virtue, truth in th' humblest breast."

24 NESTOR.

"This must be true," said Nestor. "Both in life
And nature, various fringes line the cloud,
With changing colors, sometimes gray or black,
At others red or crimson, and its edge,
Is often rugged, rough, but seldom smooth.
From weeping skies profusely fall the tears,
As copious as the griefs they typify.
These showers suffice to moisten and refresh,
The parched and arid desert of this world.
Beloved as daughters, thoughts which we beget,
Are murdered by the world's neglect and scorn;

Then we bemoan their loss with grief sincere,
As tearful Rachel mourns for children slain."

25 ELIZA.

When these pathetic words sadly expressed,
Through some responsive chord of sympathy,
Touched the emotions of Eliza's heart,
Who feels her neighbor's sorrows as her own,
She summoned courage from her modest soul,
And made reply: "We read sweet poesy,
When breezes whisper or the tempest roars,
When we can feel the music in the woods,
Tones creep into our ears like sounds of lute,
Or harp and viol, Psyche's ecstatic voice,
Melted to sadness or by grief subdued;
Or else borne upward and aloft we soar
On pinions of light gayety and joy,
To realms of Arcady entranced by dreams.
When Honor sits triumphant on our crest,
Conscience acquits us of soft folly's boast.
She said no more. She turned her beaming eyes
Upon that face—no kin, but best beloved.

26 NESTOR.

"Pride is a sin," said Nestor, "by whose fault,
Archangels fell, and Virtue lost her crown:—
Bane of weak mind which puffs the peacock's plumes,
The cancer pride a rodent ulcer grows,
Strikes deep its root within the human soul,

Devours man's vitals, feeds upon his heart,
And hungry still fain eats away his life.
Pride and ambition, sister twins by birth,
Go hand in hand with men of crazy brains.
Perdition oft by their combined assault,
Outstrips by far the boundless reach of hope.
When Reason God's best gift to thankless man,
Enthroned as goddess on high pedestal,
Becomes a shrine where nations bow and kneel,
Those genuflexions of her worshippers,
Sure proofs of empty heads shall win the curse
Of vain idolatry—Heaven's deathless wrath.
Oft in the chambered palaces of kings,
In dim religious light, devotion's choice,
With accents hushed by fear and reverence;
The devotee withdraws himself awhile,
For contemplation in deep solitude.
There builds his altar to some golden god,
In secret worships earth's Divinity,
And pays his vows before an idol's shrine.
His countenance transformed with radiant beams,
His raiment glistening brighter than white flame,
Betoken him transfigured to a prince,
Whose royal blood commingles with divine.
Dark and mysterious the powers of fate,
Throw wide the portals to admit their guest,
To that deep cavern where immortals dwell.
Transcending fields of Thule and of Ind,

Above Empyrian clouds and starlit vault;
The world invisible to mortal eye
Stands decked in verdure of Illyrian vales,
More splendid than the realms of Oberon.
See how the savage from his forest home,
Slightly more sheltered than the leopard's lair,
Soaring beyond the path of Pleiades,
Above the summit of heaven's milky way,
Amazed shall stand and dazed with heart's delight,
Survey the range of his new hunting-ground;
So true to nature as by art adorned,
Where rove the pastured ibex and gazelle.
What startling revelations shall appear
To all earth's countless tribes, when land and sea,
No barriers interpose to intercourse.
The Ethiop from Afric's sunny clime,
Ham's progeny with skin of sable hue,
Scorns not the fairest of the Aryan race.
Where hostile nations in love's concord meet,
Where wounds are healed and wrongs long since redressed;
Peace reigns in form like Eos god of morn,
Distilling perfume from flowers wet with dew.
This giantess strides forth o'er eastern hills,
Her locks in ringlets swept by th' ocean's breeze,
When wintry winds howl round their drear abode,
With sound as wild as fog-horn notes at sea.
They'll crowd together in closed circles round,

Like cold flocks sheltered from the pelting storm.
The storm-cloud lowering o'er the eastern hills
Bursts in a moment 'gainst the Mosul gates.
Along the mountain ridge, the ploughboys haste,
Like pigeons to their dove-cote, seeking home.
Or find protection from the tempest's wrath,
Beneath some tall pagoda's jutting dome."

27 ELIZA THUS REPLIED.

"What mystic legends haunt that orient land;
Upon the banks of Chebar stood the seer,
Where once the palms of Kifil cast their shade.
He prophesied: The dry bones clothed in flesh
Stood up, a mighty host, with life inspired—
A figure of dead Israel revived.
Maxims of wisdom fell from that old sage,
Who taught his generation with these words:
"So spend the hours of every passing day,
And pen the records treasured on life's page,
That their remembrance cherished as a dream,
Passed in review may greet you with a smile;
Like spirits cheering with a spectral song,
And not like Parthians wounding as they flee."

28 RESISTANCE TO TEMPTATION GAINS REWARD.

As scales of justice balanced on the beam,
Wave up and down with trembling motion swayed;

So 'twixt their hopes and fears which fill the breast,
Men rise to ecstacy or sink in gloom.
Upon that night when jostled stars sank down,
And some were blinded in the crash of worlds;
An angel from the height of glory fell,
In woman's guise whose virtue shared the wreck,
Whose apotheosis were else complete.
The constellation greets one added star;
Archangels welcome one more saint to heaven;
That tempted soul has spurned the proffered joy,
To win a nobler gift than earth bestows.

29 THE SOUL SEEKS REST.

Hail, starry host, sprung from heaven's nebula,
Obedient to Jehovah's mighty word,
Who said: "Let there be light and there was light",
How rich in splendor are those shining orbs,
That spangled canopy of blue and gold,
Attracting to the skies man's wondering gaze.
Just as a comet through etherial space,
Rushes with flaming blaze to reach its goal;
So tends each planet to his central sun,
Wearied with circling through the realms on high;
For rest most eager thus each human soul,
Seeks refuge in the bosom of his God.
O'er chasms of chaos hurtling through the gloom,
Wafted where spirits hover poised on wings,

Their disembodied ranks soar by bright worlds,
To reach the wicket gate of Canaan's land.

30 TREASURES NOT WASTED BY MOTH OR RUST.

The richest crown, the highest meed of praise,
Falls to the lot of captains in the fight,
Who won immortal laurels from the field,
Where knights of valor championed innocence,
And virtue in the tented camp of Mars,
With dreadful slaughter of proud victims slain.
Our priceless treasures lie beyond death's flood,
Those envy taught man to admire and love.
Far from the realms of Vulcan's dismal cave,
Where seething cauldrons boil and serpents hiss,
Lie fields so rich in verdure and "so full
Of goodly prospect and melodious sound",
That those sweet voices charm us with their song.
That land gives rest to all earth's sorrowing train,
Port in life's tempest, calm in the soul's wild storm.

31 TRANQUIL IS LIFE'S JOURNEY'S END.

The splendid glories of Immanuel's land,—
How doth this heart yearn for those rose-twined bowers;
Tired breasts crave comfort in their garland shades.
Upon the brink of Time's rough coast we stand,
Eternity's vast waters dark and deep,
O'er-arched with frowning cliffs roll 'neath our feet.

One leap into this angry wave is tried,
And all the bustling noise of earth grows still.
Our craft when launched upon that stormy sea,
Yields no returning to our native isle,
But onward drifting, drifting still we speed,
Till we outride the tempest's boisterous gale,
Behold the beacon yonder on the hill,
And cast our anchor in that quiet bay,
Where destiny awards a peaceful home.

32 OUR ANTICIPATED ELYSIUM.

We shall dwell in the tower on the banks of the stream,
Where the tall cheerful palms throw their wide-spreading shades,
While the music floats wild as the songs of a dream,
When the warblers whirl round mossy tufts o'er the glades.
We shall stand in the halls of a court built for kings,
We no longer shall brood o'er the pangs of our grief,
Where the ministrant angels on silvery wings,
Bear the balm to our sorrows, to pains their relief.
'Tis the island of Bimini where fountains of youth,
Are forever still gushing through nuggets of gold;
Where the quaint ancient legend transformed to the truth,
Tells the life of the race that shall never grow old.
On this isle we behold neither laughter nor tears,

For no sin, woe or death hath access to these
shores;
There's a bright, sunny landscape whose radiance cheers,
With Elysian light from the heaven's boundless
stores.
In the heat of midsummer, in the dogstar's fierce rage,
Or in winter's grey air that with bitterness chills;
There the sage with locks silvered with the hoar-frost of
age,
Hears the trumpet's rude blast o'er the echoing hills.

33 THE TEMPEST.

Wild beats the storm against the rocky shore,
While flies the homebound ship across the waves;
The seaman hanging from the topmost yard,
Descries the land; when lo, his heart grows glad.
"Pull, pull away, brave lads," the sailor cries;
"A few more leagues will bring her keel to lee;
Then farewell to the toil and to the sea.
Take heart bold tars, your daughters on the strand
Waving their kerchiefs, greet you with their smiles.
Your brothers' voices, echoing from the cliffs
Drown heaven's fierce winds which toss the angry deep.
Brave sailor's hearts, compact of flint and steel,
Bronzed faces which pale fear can never blanch,
Show now your manhood, while these eager throngs
Witness the coursings of heroic blood."
Crazed with mad ravings of the wrathful storm
The ship's brave crew wrought at the ropes and helm.

The cauldron of the sea boiled up aloft
As 'twere by witchcraft stirred. When all seemed lost
Each soul unto his patron saint or god,
Addressed his prayers,—the sailor's earnest prayers
Which knock so gently at the gates on high
Secure sure entrance to heaven's splendid towers.
A while the ship thus wrestled with the storm
Adrift upon the cradling wave she floats,
A toy and plaything of earth's elements
Until she plunges through the briny depths,
Drowning all souls that spurned heaven's proffered aid.
How oft the broken spars and shattered decks
Attest the ruin which life's tempest works.
Time hath her billows and these rudely dash
Against the confines of earth's sea-girt isles.
God resting on his throne alone is calm.
The flotsam covers the wild waste of life
While man on troubled waters breasts the tide.
The wrecks of manhood strewn along the main
Confront the voyager on life's rough sea.
When shall we reach the calm? How many years
Must we upon this stormy ocean sail
Before we reach the haven which we seek?
From out the deep dark caverns midst the gloom
A voice comes forth as from the oracle.
Of Dolphian Apollo: thus it speaks
"Rend not O man the double mystic veil
Which hides the future from thy sight and ken.
Thou canst not fathom with thy plummet line
Depths so profound."

FOURTH DUAN

1 THE SEARCH FOR REMEDY.

The restless human mind
Hath sought with active zeal and diligence,
Some remedy for earthly ills whereby
Man may repair the breach of Adam's curse;
And in the fountain of eternal youth,
May bathe his limbs thus to rejuvenate
His mortal frame. This fails to subjugate
The bold impassioned soul which spurns control,
And will not wait for future bliss in worlds,
Which lie beyond man's grasp. His alchemy
Must change this earth to paradise as 'twas,
Before man's sin and fall, when time was young,
As the philisopher's weird stone transmutes,
Base metals into gold. But Heaven's high will,
Is wrought by Christ's atoning sacrifice,
Who thus through blood transforms His cross of wood
To diadems, which crown His royal sons.

2 THE DRAUGHT OF LETHE.

Life's end seems the graphic miniature of sleep,
Balsam to wounds which breed from grief and care,
Yokefellow of those drowsy anodynes,
Distilled in antique crucibles which drip,
Like hot alembics of skilled alchemist,
Who toils in service of the ancient gods.

Life is the last, best gift of God to man;
The boon to which he clings with desperate
And most tenacious grasp, the precious prize
With which he parts in hopeless, blind despair.
He guards this treasure with bold vigilance,
And when at last that thief which robs and steals,
Snatches this priceless jewel from his hand,
He falls beneath the stroke which lays him low.

3 NO SURETY IN CASTING THE DIE.

Apollo's priestess sits no longer now
On Delphic tripod to foretell decrees,
Which Fate with twirling spindle quickly winds.
Mortals foreknow not now man's destiny,
All their best prayers may never move those fates,
Who in triumphant marches through this world,
Mingling the cup of weeping with those draughts,
Which flow from chalices full brimmed with hope,
Transform our tears of joy to tears of woe.
But when the man has played the game of life,
And lost his all by one last fatal throw,
He must not shrink to cross the mighty flume,
Whose floodgates open on the unseen shores.
Straining the wormwood from sad, pensive lives
Of bitterness and sorrow, dark with care,
The friends and brothers, round us would oft fain
Mingle their sweetness in our cups of joy.

4 THE FINAL SEPARATION.

Anent those faults which turn man's heart aside,
Some priest shall shrive and housel every soul,
Dispensing faith's viaticum to all,
Who travel hence on life's last pilgrimage.
One lays his head upon some faithful breast,
Clasps in his palm the hand he loves the best,
Turns his bright face to that dark wall for rest,
And there beholds the region of the blest.
The deepest grief is to espy a son,
Patting his mother's breast which feels no throb,
Gazing in those dear eyes now lustreless,
And calling for that voice which answers not.
Ye mourners, mark well how that pallid brow,
Like a marble statue blanches stiff and cold.
The mother bird when wounded in the wing,
Returns no more unto her nest and brood,
In vain her fledgelings gaping for their food,
Wait for her visit: for she comes not back.

5 SPRING.

Farewell, ye wintry winds, that whistle round
The bleak, cold hills. The joyous, lively spring
Shoots gaily forth to gladden earth's brown fields,
And bathe the blossoms of these honeyed flowers,
In evening dews which wash their fragrant cups.
We bid adieu to icy frost and snow,
That we may hail with glad, light heart the twigs,

Which bud and bloom upon the fresh-leaved trees.
Welcome, ye balmy airs and smiling skies,
Whose azure depths like liquid crystals shine.
Bold Chanticleer now lifts his horn and blows
His shrill or mellow note; with pride he struts,
Cross furrowed glebe to greet his cackling dames;
While drowsy bees, their droning flight pursue,
And humming birds skip lightly o'er the way,
From bushy bough to hedge and prickly brier.

6 THE AUDIBLE VOICE OF NATURE.

Behold the analogue of life's gay spring,
Which spreads her lap of verdure round the path,
Of gentle youth in sweetness of its bloom.
The maiden's blushes on her damask cheek,
Rival the honeysuckle in the ides
Of June. Our life begins as doth the year,
With screams of prattling joy whose sun dissolves
The snow and melts the hoary frost on dunes and rocks,
In fields where violets and pansies grow,
We watch the plumage of the birds, and hear
The bobolink that tunes his merry song,
On yonder oaken bower. The nightingale
Now chants his lay while darkness veils the sky.

7 SUMMER.

When summer comes to perfume all the air,
We hear the murmur of the crystal stream,

And spread our limbs beneath the pine tree's shade.
We gaze on the fleecy whiteness of the cloud,
Painted upon the heaven's serene blue sky,
And so life's summer comes with torrid heat,
To parch the fields and bake the arid soil,
And then the autumn with its yellow leaf,
Invites man to the gathering of the sheaves
Of ripened grain, and harvesting of fruit,
Which falls and soon decays; then winter chills
The air and drives the husbandman to seek
A shelter for his flocks and herds.
While he betakes him to that narrow house,
Where he must sleep until the twilight shows,
That dawn which ushers in eternal day,
Whose brighter sun shall shed heaven's genial warmth,
The harbinger of everlasting spring.

8 THE UNIVERSE.

Columns and pillars which support this earth,
Throwing their arches round celestial spheres,
Bear up the sky and form arcades to match
The mighty fabric of this universe.
Enameled with cerulean blue, this dome,
The firmament stands an inverted cup,
Above each hemisphere, throughout the night
Bespangled with fair stars, but every day
Resplendent with the beams of heaven's bright sun.
What Power can guide aright these planet worlds,

Through their eccentric circuits round the sun?
Whose seigniory could shape these cosmic orbs,
In ordered beauty cast these countless globes,
And bend them to His will? God deals for man.

9 REAPING AS THEY SOW.

In single combat gladiators meet,
Long wont to win heroic spoils of war,
And brave rare dangers on life's battlefield.
Fire flashes from their eyes and gleaming swords,
Death in its thousand frightful forms may come;
Sometimes upon the tramrail one is crushed,
Beneath the flange of iron wheels whose edge
Cuts through the quivering flesh effusing blood,
Conveying thence the eger of man's life.
Within the compass of this sphere, called earth,
Where man reaps as he sows the fruits of toil,
Zeal hath her votaries and strife, her woes.
'Tis best that we should yield to Fate's decrees,
Which drive the soul to yonder blissful world,
Where eyes will shed no tears and human hearts
Will need no solace for their griefs or cares,
No balm their wounds to heal.

10 REQUIEM.

Behold the king upon his ebon throne,
In high imperial majesty of state,
Before whose gate the rabble doff their caps;

How is he straitened in the bonds of care,
Until he finds a space wherein to lay
His sceptre down in death's long dreamless sleep.
Bards of the nation tune their elegies,
To plaintive strains and chant their requiem lays.
The monarch's cold, dull ear that used to hear
Those adulations, now no longer heeds
The flatteries of earth's vain syocophants.
The head that proudly wore a jeweled crown,
Now humbled in the dust demands no wreath
To ornament that skull-shaped carapace.

11 THE SPECTRE.

After life's toils are over, and its storms
Have ceased, when smitten down by Heaven's last
stroke,
The greatest lords that empire ever held,
As peaceful and serenely blest shall lie,
As though they never wore a diadem,
Nor felt the keenness of one sorrow's pang,
In lost remembrance of their agony.
What means that grim and spectral form so fierce,
Which stands before the gateway to the tomb,
And with his finger beckens thither?
What message doth he bring to mortal ears,
That he must press his lips with look so stern,
Conceal his bold emprise which fate has sealed,
Until life's rude, sharp buffetings have ceased.

12 LUCIFER.

What a sepulchral voice and savage mien!
He strides about with countless daggers sheathed,
Beneath his arm with which he threats to strike
The weak, defenceless victim of his power.
He speaks in tones of terror which affright
The startled world. Above his flaming sword,
A bolder spirit couched in shadow's form,
Lifts his proud visage seeming sinister,
And arch like some foul fiend whose cloven hoofs
And horns of misshaped mould declare his name,
And lineage as Satan's. 'Hold', quoth he,
'That deed is mine, and mine the soul,
Which with thy ruthless hand, O priceless Death,
Thou hast from earthly cerements roughly torn'.
"Though once my slave thou art henceforth not bond
But free, my own ally and bosom friend"!

13 THE PEACEFUL SLEEP OF CHILDHOOD.

Loud rang his fiendish laugh through mundane spheres.
These flaming lanterns of the sky shall shed,
Their rays of light upon the pilgrims path,
And guide the footsore traveller on his way,
Bewildered in earth's labyrinth. The stars
Those sessile orbs fixed in the firmament,
Those eyes of Deity behold this world.
The product of His skill whose fabric yields
To human minds such rapt delight and joy.

How placid seems the sleep of innocence,
Beneath home's peaceful roof where no rude care,
Dares to invade the realm of love's domain,
With furrowed wrinkles for an infant's brow.
How sweet the smile which curls those ruby lips,
So often greeted with a mother's kiss,
That with her silken touch and her soft hand,
Smooths every roughness for her tender child.

14 AGE REAPS: YOUTH SOWS THE SEED.

Enwrapt in mystery which none can solve,
How strangely intricate the threads of life
Seem mixed and interwoven with the woof
Of human destiny. The highest rate of usury must
youth
Repay to age for those excessive draughts,
Pledged in our early years. The flower-seeds,
Which we oft plant in youth spring up
In beds of roses to adorn the bowers;
But thistles grow: we pluck and crush their heads,
Which prick and sting our hands with their sharp
thorns.
Life's harmonies and buffetings become,
In pleasures and in pains, antagonisms,
Which mar its beauty, chafe its peace and joy.—
They leave a yearning for some treasured bliss,
Within each human heart which keenly feels
Earth's ill and woe.

15 LIFE'S VOYAGE AND PERILS.

Hark to the moaning sea; its ebb and flow
Mark time with pulse-beat of dame nature's heart,
Whose sad complaint creeps in each listening ear.
The boatmen launch their craft with muffled oars;
Cargoes of shale or palm each galley brings,
While shallops dip the crested wave of brine.
The cry of anguish mingled with despair,
Mounts from the deep to smite the gates on high.
The call for mercy pleading still in vain,
Invokes that aid which heavenly powers bestow.
The lost, wrecked mariner falls to his knees,
As lean and hungry beggars bow and cringe,
In Rome's high carnival.

16 THE RAGING BILLOWS.

The angry sea
Rolls on inconstant as the flatile winds.
O how the bosom of wild ocean heaves!
Her billows dancing with delight swell high,
Proud of those trophies which lie buried deep
Within her vaults, her garnished catacombs.
Dashing against enrockments on the shore,
Waves of eternity forever roll,
Floating rough driftwood from the banks of time.
The Persian fire-god, Mithras, long enshrined
In grottos wreathed by Zoroaster's hand,

With garlands of fresh flowers shall find his peer,
In cloud-born Jove, the ethnic Deity;
And both shall bow beneath the sway of one
True and eternal God.

17 THE SUPREME DIVINITY.

Poseidon with his trident on the waves,
Pluto with his Vulcanian thunderbolt,
And all inferior deities crushed down,
Beneath the weight of Pelion must yield
To their dread Sovereign, heaven's almighty King.
Wert thou the lean and hungry Cassius e'en,
Friend of immortal Caesar, thou must bend
Beneath that sceptre which enthralls the world.
Michael himself and spirits round the throne,
Prostrate in homage lie before that Chief,
Who guides the destiny and sways the life
Of countless multitudes in earth and heaven.
No planet can eclipse that splendid Sun,
The bright effulgence of whose beams pervades,
The utmost bounds of this vast universe.

18 UNITED PRAISE.

God is that Father who embraces all
Within His arms. His children on His breast,
Enfolded rest in His Paternal care.
Thrice holy and triune, Jehovah, Thou,
Entitled to our worship shalt receive

Due meed of honor from creation's host.
From peopled groves, hill altars and the spires
Of woodland temples, wilt Thou hear earth's choirs,
Of ten score thousand songsters wild with glee,
Hymning sweet paeans of glad praise to Thee.
The King who walks on circles of the spheres,
And treads the clouds as dust beneath His feet,
Whose chariot wheels borne on the wind ascend,
The pillars of the sky 'mid crystal waves
Of heaven's serene and tranquil air, that King
Shall reign when all the emperors of earth
Are sleeping in the vale of darkest night,
Beneath the sombre yew trees gloomy shade.

19 IN THE DEEP SEA.

The giant Master of puissant force,
In life's eventful story claims His place,
The foremost Ruler to control man's fate.
The splintered wreck of countless argosies,
The product of man's art and industry,
Lie scattered wide upon the ocean's bed.
There rest the heaps of human skeletons,
Which blanch within the wasteful depths of brine,
Where tritons revel in wild carnival.
Cold as the waves where narwhals plough the main,
The icebergs heave amidst the ships loud crash;
Bold sailors tremble while the sea-fog lowers.
In scapement from this soul's all-harrowing scene,

List to the evening hymn of Philomel,
Flitting with nimble wing from bush to briar,
The bird of sweetest song that chants her lay
On yonder bough through all the livelong night.

20 THE SLEEPER FROM HIS DREAM SHALL WAKE.

What syren voice shall sing the soul to sleep,
When cradled in the gentle arms of death?
What singing bird shall hover o'er our graves,
Matching the merry nightingale's sweet song,
Through the long darkness of that dreamless night,
Until life dawns on time's last gala day?
What hand shall wind those ravelled curtains up,
Which barred the chamber window of our eyes,
When first we fell asleep? Then shall we wake
To know no weeping; yea shall watch for aye,
With no more sleeping, safely lodged with Him,
Whose kindly keeping satisfies our hopes.
O that we might expand our wings and fly,
Like eagles toward that far receding shore.

21 NO RESTRAINT CAN KEEP THE SOUL.

Garlands of flowery-kirtled meads bestow,
Their fragrant odors there to captivate
The willing sense of all earth's denizens.
Lo heaven's fair stars draped in effulgence shine,
Above the waves of earth's cerulean sea,

Whose troubled winds with wild tempestuous roar
Dash hard against the barriers of the sky.
Trained like a steed equipped for battle's charge,
These elements submit to God's control,
And march by phalanx in equestrian style;
His hand can curb their curvet with His rein,
His arm restrain their prancing escapade.
Lo these wild winds and rude tempestuous skies,
Stamped like the frown upon God's angry brow,
No longer stand to bar the gates of heaven,
To keep the soul back from its entrance there;
Where we shall stay forever far removed
From this rough torrent which now sweeps away,
The world's base chaff with all its earthly dross.

22 IMMORTAL HOPE.

Although the lamb, weak and resistless prey,
Seized in the vulture's talons, swiftly borne
To yonder crag upon the mountain's height,
Affords a festive morsel to her brood;
Yet parts he with but mortal life and frame;
While man owns an immortal part, a soul,
No dagger's point or tooth of beast can harm.
This yields he up to all-devouring time,
Treasure to endless years, kept in that store,
Whose coffers never rust. How can we solve
The riddle of man's life which seems so dark,
Compared with that enigma of his death,

Which shadows hope in deepest mystery?
What form of dread spreads out her mystic veil,
Around the golden tresses of that youth,
What figure stands in dazzling light of morn,
On earth's proud pedestal? Can that be life?
But while we gaze, the fleecy cloud dissolves.

23 THE RECOMPENSE.

In rapt delight we wonder at the freaks,
And fickle change through which the shadows pass.
The ghostly apparition drops her veil.
Behold the skull and cross-bones, ghastly sight,
Revealed through dismal darkness of the night,
By death's cold taper or some glow-worm's light.
O when mortality is laid aside,
'Tis man's ambition that it may be said;
Our friend is gone; but while we mourn his loss,
The glorious treasure of the best he wrought,
Is shown us in the works he left behind.
Upon his pathway fortune seldom smiled,
But well he bore her buffets and her frowns,
With sweetest patience suffered her reproofs,
Till this last blow brought him to perfect peace.
The pen he wielded was a magic wand,
Which either stored the page with learned lore,
Where sages study to adorn their wit,
Or else each sentence in itself a poem,
Instructs the bards with its inspiring word,

To write their ditties in immortal verse.
His works sort not with perishable things;
The nations will not let them die. They live
As deathless as his soul which long outlasts
The conflagration of this changeful world.

24 LIFE'S REST AND WREATH.

The riddle now is solved, all doubts removed,
The dark forebodings of uncertain life,
With its ill-omened spectres vanished far
From man's dim eyes; his soul has reached the light,
No longer gropes he through earth's fearful night.
Far from this scene of ribaldry and jest,
Secreted from the gaze of mortal eyes,
The renovated man pursues his scheme,
Of blazoned fame and gilded heraldry,
Or courts the shadows of oblivion,
Beyond the gateway of Elysium.
The honor of his crown now sits on him,
More meekly than the pomp of earthly kings.

25 THE SPIRIT AT PEACE.

No human voice of animated clay,
Can summon back the spirit which has fled,
Or life restore to his pale ashen bust.
No charm of witch or pious augury
Can vivify the urn of sacred dust,
Which holds his treasured bones in sepulture.

Embalmed in tears he sleeps a placid sleep,
Beneath the tinted verdure of the vale;
While incense burns and rises like our prayers,
Expressive of our hopes that he may rest,
A sleeper sheltered in the arms of peace.
For human life is but the golden eve,
Of day that dawns upon a brighter morrow.

26 SINGING THE ANTHEMS.

What voice with sweetest music fills the air,
Like siren's song of charming melody?
No force is strong enough to sweep away
The pilgrim while he fords the Stygian flood.
Ye heavenly choristers in chorus sing;
Let David string his harp and touch the chords,
That used to sound of old in regal halls.
Ye princely vocalists of ancient fame,
Assist the quire concordant hymns to sing,
With your skilled voices crowd these temple courts,
Earth's sacred fanes, as in glad days of yore.
From deafening noise, harsh piercing cries of woe,
Fastidious ears turn toward that mellow strain,
Which floats along the shores of Thule land,
And fills the ravished sense with tuneful sound,
Charming and sweet as is the lover's kiss.

27 HOPE.

There is a time to live, a time to die;
And both with equal gladness man may choose.

How can this long-imprisoned soul forbid
To drop these manacles and leave behind
This tenement and soar through earth's free air.
The cargo saved from countless freighted ships,
With rich immortal treasures gains the port,
Whose confines circumscribe an endless calm.
All that is pure and noble still survives;
The base and vile are shattered in the wreck,
And sink beneath the angry, whelming flood.
Man's conscience, monitor of life's high aims,
Shall guide the helm across this troubled sea.
Long may our courage foil the tempter's power,
Subdue his rage, and match his quenchless zeal.

28 THE WIDE SPREADING HAVOC.

Time with entrammelled locks and hoary beard,
Stalks like a frantic ghost o'er earth's grey clod,
And in the drama of this sad world's woe,
In buskin shoon performs his tragic act.
Death on white palfrey trained like warlike steed,
Enriched with trophies both from land and sea,
With banners floating in the flush of power,
With skull and cross-bones for his armorial sign,
Wields his proud sceptre o'er this conquered world.
So wide he sweeps to gather in his spoils,
That nought escapes his touch save one small sphere,
Whose paltry pittance his high scorn ignores.

Behold the thunder cloud of judgment lowers,
Let all the brave keep sentry in the rocks.

29 PLEA FOR DEFENCE.

From this drear waste of ocean's wilderness,
A voice goes up, the cry of human hearts,
Entreative prayer knocks at the gate of heaven,
To beg redress for man's most monstrous wrongs.
"Save him, O God," it pleads, "from life's wild storm,
From sorrow's dismal gloom and orphan's tears,
Support his soul beneath misfortune's stroke,
When swells the tide which buries his last hope,
When sinks his fainting heart in grief's deep gulf,
Sustain him gracious Heaven amidst his fears;
In wild despair clothe him with confidence,
Beneath the shelter of protecting arms,
That he may breast the shock of drowning floods.
Stand firm as rock against life's last dread wave.

30 MARTYRDOM.

How honored and revered are sainted dead;
Martyrs who perished in the quest of truth,
Who suffered for man's conscientious rights,
For virtue's civic principles in state,
For freedom of God's worship in His church.
Their precious life-blood boldly did they shed,
Harvest of souls reaped on those sanguine fields,
Where Stephen first by sacrifice of life,

Paid back to bigotry and prejudice
Their double dues and won his diadem.
In this bold warfare each reformer stood,
A force of sturdy strength against the world,
The current of whose thoughts and purposes,
He bent from sordid and ignoble sloughs
To nobler heights through channels more Divine.

31 WARFARE OF LIFE.

We hear the music of the tuneful horn,
Which calls each man to duty's battlefield,
That note entrancing as the sea-maid's song,
Allures the youth to venture on the beach,
Where his brave comrades fell, where all
Who fight for liberty and glory die.
Age after age with martial tread moves on,
To trace the track of generations gone,
Marching together towards life's destined goal.
The seaman lashed unto his wave-washed deck,
Or rudely rocked on cradle of the mast,
His eyelids heavy with night's leaden sleep,
At seven bells watching till his drooping heart,
Grows weary; but revives with merry cheer,
While dreaming of his children, wife and home,—
The seaman trusts all to that noble ship,
Which bears him on to meet love's sweet embrace.

32 THE DANGERS OF THE DEEP.

In life's eventful voyage, how the winds
So fiercely armed with heaven's dread thunderbolt,

Strike on the sea and pile the mountain waves,
Above the clouds. So roughly tossed, the ship
Without a rudder on this stormy main,
May drift or founder and the seaman's skill
Oft fails to guide his galleon into port.
Many a rocky shoal beneath the waves,
Lies hidden from the view; and mariners
Upon these dreadful friths while drifting by,
Make shipwreck on the banks or foggy shore.
Save them, ye powers, in Neptune's calmer days,
Which men call halcyon, from winter's rage.
Their father's God shall be their trust for aye,
While life shall poise the scale upon its beam.
And should it chance that they were born beneath
Some lucky star which ruled the happy hour
Of their nativity, they shall exult,
Buoyant with hope that life is still secure.

33 RESCUE FOR THE IMPERILLED.

If not the stars, some *genius loci* may
Preserve them bound amidst the vessel's wreck;
Some guardian deity their grief may spy,
While keeping vigil round man's wretched sons;
Yea guide them through the highways of this earth,
O'er river, gulf and ocean, seas and floods,
The streets of this world's Venice, till they reach
The safe lagoons where anchorage is sure.
There let the storm-winds jostling round their graves,

E'er drench the headstones, pious hands have reared.
Man, like the oreole that's limed and caught
Upon the branch of yonder gnarled oak,
The more he struggles to be free from bonds,
Which hold him fast to earth"s impediments,
The firmer he lies bound, nor can he fly,
Nor soar to lofty thoughts or themes sublime.

34 THE DEADLY WOUND.

As when the eagle wounded on the wing
By rifle aimed with hunter's cruel skill,
Drooping he falls; and strives in vain to shun
His captor's swift pursuit; so man contends
In vain endeavors to elude the shaft,
Which time and age and death so surely aim,
At his most vulnerable shield of life.
Well may he guard against the deadly steel,
With panoply impregnable as rock,
So that its thrust may mark the quivering flesh
With wound as slight as the spent arrow leaves.
Or the wild eagle mounting to his nest,
Upon the air through which it swiftly flies.

35 THE SPIRITUAL CONTEST.

Man now engages in the thickest fight,
And from this battle makes no easy flight;
But when his coward conscience drives him home,
He covers his retreat through bosky glades,

With Parthian arrows which he aims behind.
His bold ambition bravely spurs him on
To play the hero in this mimic war;
He leads the charge against God's enemy,
Who will no nearer reach the gates of heaven,
Than by the verge of hell to take his stand,
And watch for aye heaven's splendid, lofty towers.
He that would climb to reach the dizzy heights,
Which proud ambition builds of castled air,
May gain a golden crown; but diadems
Will rust and lose their lustre as they fade.

36 ASPIRATIONS VENTURESOME.

The bubble, fame, blown with the breath will burst,
Transformed to froth; and man shall lay aside
His broken pipe soon spoiled like childhood's toy,
Which puffed his glory into being.
Yet oft mistaken for the limpid sea,
This frothy foam invites the mariner
To stake his ventures on a stormy main,
Where his best risks must founder in the wreck,
On that last voyage which shatters all his hopes.
There stand the crowds where carping envy waits,
With jealous eye to watch the rival knight,
Who champions the cause of innocence;
And wields the lance of fearless chivalry.

37 THE TRIUMPH OF TRUTH.

Kings reign and fall; their empires soon decay.
When Lion-hearted Richard draws his sword,

The shout of victory ascends to heaven.
O mock not him with that dull feint of praise,
When thou wouldst strike him down with parried thrust,
A poniard lies concealed beneath his belt,
Whose hidden point is thirsting for thy blood.
Flamens of Mars their priestly office use
In burning incense to this god of war.
But truth more mighty than Aladdin's lamp,
Through earth's dark corners casts her piercing beams,
To scare the imps of falsehood and of night,
Back to their native hell from whence they came.

38 PREVAILING TRUTH.

O'er bristling host of error and of sin,
Which trample down our weak and timid fears,
The truth, more stout, than Caesar's brawny arm,
Shall march at length in triumph to the front,
And sweep the battlements of wrong away.
Midst crashing spheres when time's last moon shall wane,
The sun extinguished, wandering from his track,
Stars blotted out shall fall from heaven's blue vault,
The earth and sky together shall be rolled,
In one vast flame which shall consume the world.
Where wilt thou hide thy face, O mortal Man,
In that impending storm? How wilt thou quake
When fear shall blanch the cheek while ghouls sweep by.
Ashamed for foul, dark sin, man slinks away,

To bury his wild features 'neath the earth,
In creviced mountain caves and fissured rocks.

39 THE DAY OF JUDGMENT.

Ghosts stalk abroad; they crowd the ambient air;
But vanish like the fleeting summer cloud,
Which casts its giant shadow o'er the fells.
Mute nature sighs to hear her children groan,
Her beating heart grows faint, her bosom swells.
No flood can quench the flames of passion's fire,
Which burn her vitals with volcanic wrath.
No furnace is so hot, no smoke so dense,
In earth or hell, but some wise power may plot,
To summon skill wherewith to mitigate
Its terrible destruction and restrain
It's boundless rage; but none can e'er assuage,
The fervent heat which burns a blazing world,
Till rocks and hills and seas shall be consumed.

40 THE LAST GREAT CATASTROPHE.

Ah what a crash will deafen man's dull ear,
When towers shall tumble, battlements shall fall,
The palaces of potentates and kings,
Torn from their deep foundations of hewn stone,
Shall sway and tremble in the dreadful storm,
Which cracks their crumbling ruins into dust,
Until through air and sky the welkin rings,
With earth's wild roar and heaven's loud plaintive wail.

When souls to judgment fly from earth's four winds,
Thy trump's shrill note, O Gabriel, shall rise,
Thy sovereign sceptre scape thy grasp, O Time!
The world now clad in drapery of cloud,
Which like a mantle folded round the corse,
Completes the shroud wherein its ashes rest,—
The world lies buried, earth's cremated wrack,
To sleep in nature's urn, but wake no more.

41 THE DEATHLESS SPIRIT.

These everlasting hills with woodland crowned,
The wondrous fabric of God's universe,
All, all shall perish and become as nought;
Save only thought which prized immortal born,
Breathing sweet incense from the dewlapt morn,
Shall long outlive this wreck of rolling spheres.
The human soul whose tender filaments
Are firmer than the threads of gossamer,
Or softest silk, reeled from its smooth cocoon,
On filature of pearl can never die.
The soul, like fabled salamander's flesh,
Defies the flame and quenches sparks of fire,
Survives the ruins of earth's charred remains,
And lives beyond the bounds of age and time.

42 THE INDESTRUCTIBLE SOUL.

No power but His who breathed this living soul,
In man can rob him of this heavenly gift,

Nor filch this life away; no tooth of moth,
Through lapse of waning years can bite its thread;
No rust can canker or corrode the face,
Of this most treasured jewel heaven-bestowed.
Through darkness all obscure man struggles on,
Cheered with the hope of immortality.
Beyond the gloomy portals of the grave,
Faith sees a light, a radiant flame from heaven,
Which brightens up when we draw near the tomb,
Its gates to enter, 'neath its vault to sleep.
Beyond these changing scenes we spy a world,
Which has no change and peopled with our kin,
Once like ourselves, pilgrims and strangers here.
It waits to greet us with a welcome home,
Where we shall press the forehead, lip and cheek,
With fond affection's token undismayed.

43 THE SATISFACTION PRESAGED.

What worlds hang on these hopes! what comforts flow
Amidst these toils and cares to man's sad heart,
From rainbows in our clouded skies which seem
So stormy! Soon the whistling winds grow tranquil,
soon
The thunder's voice is hushed beneath Heaven's smile.
That world will satisfy our craving souls,
Better than glory, our ambitious minds,
Yea, better far than gold, our avarice.
The eye of pity, and the smile of welcome,

Features familiar to God's worthy poor,
With their indellible though stainless die,
Will stamp impressions on the face of man,
Whose brows the mirror to love's thoughtful deeds.
In heaven's bright sphere of endless happiness,
Expectancy will find those sweet delights,
Which do not cloy; for men born to be kings
Will doff their mean attire to wear their crowns.
While in this field of sweat and toil we stay,
We plough, we sow and pluck the weeds away.
'Tis ours to watch the growing wheat and corn,
Watered with dews of heaven and with our tears,
It is the hope which triumphs o'er our fears,
That we the ripened harvest soon shall reap,
That we shall garner up the plenteous stores,
In treasures which will not shrink nor fail.
So rich indemnity rewards the strife,
To cheer us on this battlefield of life.

FIFTH DUAN

1 SLEEP.

Slyly he creeps through shadows of the night,
To bring my weary limbs their calm repose;
He clambers through the darkness, up the stairs,
Unto my chamber door, stops not to knock,
But enters as my guest to share my bed.
Begs me to rest and then beguiles mine ear,
With whispered flatterings, until at length
He overcomes my restless thought with hum
Of dronelike wings and pictures for my dreams.
'Tis sleep that wakens fancies in my brain,
Stills those grim spectres, sorrow, care and pain,
Drives from my anxious brow toil's fevered heat.
He lulls and sooths me with a tender touch,
As soft and gentle as a mother's kiss,
Upon the placid cheek of her sweet babe.

2 DREAMS.

'Tis sleep that trips across my pillowed couch,
And with his plastic finger seals mine eyes.
So swift he flies up to the giddy height,
Where slumber reigns in Morpheus' gilded hall,
That his tired guests their royal master greet,
While their majestic frames lie stretched across
The floors and aisles of his grand corridors.

There in the home of dreams midst nodding plumes,
I see the youth and aged sire asleep,
Both rich and poor, the one in royal silk,
The other dressed in rags, unlike in rank,
All pay their homage to this god of sleep.

3 TROUBLED WAKEFULNESS.

Oft times the thoughts within the maniac's brain,
Hold mutiny against sweet slumber's voice,
Whose force is smothered with their jargon yells.
Care, grief and pain which shut the door to sleep,
And bar the iron gates against that thief,
Who steals away man's consciousness of life,
Not seldom yields to slumber's crafty spell,
Whose drowsy potions, drugs and anodynes,
Soothe man's spent heart whene'er night's curtains fall.
Alas! for anxious and erosive cares,
Which creep through chambers in the midnight watch,
And gnaw like canker in the furrowed brow,
And chafe the brain and brush away the balm,
That seals the lids in dreams of dewy sleep.

4 THE LAST SLUMBER.

Welcome to hands which soothe with softest touch,
And pour the spray upon each fevered cheek,
Which smooth the wrinkles in the lap of pain,
And gently minister sweet anodynes
To frantic minds and throbbing hearts. Alack

In night's black vault of sadness man must sleep,
Within earth's bosom, dense with shades compressed,
Until he treads that labyrinth whose end
Opes on the light of an eternal day.
When the dusk form of tragedy stole forth,
Through silent chambers in the dead of night,
Protected by the darkness of her veil,
And watched his victim slain by cruel hands,
The blood upon the pillow told the tale
Of horror, shocking the sense like Bluebeard's crime.
The sun abashed withdrew his face for fright,
He durst not gaze upon a scene so fell.
That potent drug which chains man's captive will,
And locks his reason in forgetfulness,
Hath charms to soothe his idle fears, and quench
The fever burning with delirious rage;
But hath less skill to save from mental wreck,
The victim of delusive hopes and dreams.

5 ON THE LAST DAY OF THE YEAR AND CENTURY.

O how these earthly shadows on the dial,
Come and depart, as in the circling years,
The new treads in the footprints of the old.
And in the movement of these rolling spheres,
How quickly fly the moments bringing here
Age and decline, the end of man's brief life.

Alas, how soon his evening twilight fades
Into the darkness of the silent night!
But signals in the omens of the sky,
Reveal time's hopeful, golden augury;
Tomorrow will be brighter than today.

6 COULD WE BUT FORGET OUR GRIEFS.

Alas, this world so wearisome to me,
Seems full of dire distress which plagues each heart,
And man's sole remedy for earthly ills
Lies buried in the grave's oblivion.
There's not a spot of land from pole to pole,
From Cathay westward unto Albion's isle,
(Where tender recollections cling enshrined)
Secure enough to treasure up our tears,
Or furnish refuge to our banished hopes.
O, 'tis so tedious living in these wilds,
That fain would I assign myself the task,
To rid me of this coil, like serpent's fold,
Which binds my spirit to this mortal flesh.

7 COMFORTS IN THE AIR.

Beshrew my heart, no flame shall singe a hair,
Upon my head; no dagger drink this blood,
Till the last circle of exhausted time
Shall waste the hour-glass worn with sandy streams.
This sharpness in the air which bites so keen,
Like the crisp frosting on the autumn leaves,

But whets life's relish, and new vigor lends
To my arm's seizure; how chill blow wintry winds
That creep through broken panes in crazy huts,
To freeze the children of the helpless poor.
The parching heat of summer's midday sun,
That ripens grain and paints the yellow corn,
Seems thus to bless the poor man's homely toil,
But wilts the sere leaf while it drives the kine
For shelter to the shade of yonder oak.

8 THE ELEMENTS MINISTERING FOR GOOD AND EVIL.

The elements, heaven's ministrants to man,
Whose nature is transformed to detriment,
Oft kill the creatures they were meant to bless.
The thorn and brier which grow so near the rose,
Betoken this alliance twixt the banes,
Which plague and stores that gladden with delight.
Beneath one roof our joys and sorrows dwell,
Twin-sisters born in holy wedlock's bonds,
Though so unlike yet of one stock derived.
Beneath the evening shadows of these hills,
Where solemn grandeur reigns, like nature's queen,
The hasty stream glides by from which man dips
The luscious wholesome draught to quench his thirst.
In these same waters he both bathes and drowns.

9 CAUSES OF BOTH DEATH AND LIFE.

The fire that warms consumes; the fertile earth
That yields her seed to nourish man's frail frame,
Opens her jaws with force that splits the rocks,
And hides him in ungarnished sepulchre.
The labored ox that with his bellowing voice,
Calls to his mates that graze the neighboring moor,
Basks in the air where foul miasmas breed,
And sniffs the breeze which bears the thunder-bolt.
In this same element man breathes and lives,
But through its poison vapors sickens sore,
Or by the storm-cloud's flash of lightning falls.
How close beside the dizzy heights of glory,
Stands dark disgrace, that with a cobra's fangs,
As dreadful as the fierce Euroclydon
Strikes deeper than the flesh to wound the soul.

10 THE STORM.

Blow on wild winds till ye have spent your rage,
Howl through the mountains where the beasts crouch low.
Force your bold way through crevices and walls.
'Tis dark tonight, the storm is fierce and loud,
War rules the elements of earth and air,
The tempest rends the oak and tears the sea,
Winds dash the billows 'gainst the rocks and clouds,
They toss the ships like toys upon the deep.

The moon lies hidden in heaven's drear recess,
No star shines out to cheer the gloom of night;
The sailor trembles on the mast; his cry
Amidst the creaking cordage of the ship,
Goes up so shrill, 'tis heard above the storm.
Look out upon the waters where the waste,
Spreads wide upon the ocean's verge and see
What havoc wrought by this tempestuous flood,
Lies scattered o'er the bosom of yon gulf.

11 FAITH DISCOVERER OF MAN'S LOST HOPE.

Upon the border of that silent land,
Where ghostly forms in liveried armor clad,
Peer round and haunt the mouldy gates of tombs,
To test each grave, if sprites may enter there.
List to the trumpet's sound of reveillé,
Whose echo wakes man's spirit from the dust.
Hark how the drumbeat on time's rocky shore,
Thus summons ages from earth's realms of sleep.
The bugle note which falls upon the ear,
As gently as the dews upon the lawn,
Dowered with hope, which wreathes the placid face
With smiles that beam through beauty's noblest gift,
Calms troubled souls whose depths profound have lost,
Their sweetest chord in halsening crash of worlds.

12

The courtly knight that wields his trenchant steel,
Upon whose shield a guardian leopard stands,
Thrusts his keen blade through foemen's quivering flesh,
Lays bare the veins through which life's current flows.
The gladiator with his strength superb,
Grasping antagonist in hostile clutch,
Whose coping force has never yet been foiled;
Crippled with struggling for the laurel wreath,
Stretches at length, his victim on the plain,
Bleeding and dying 'midst th' arena's sand.
The holy conclave will surpass our dreams;
When opes the tomb her prison gates to give
An exit to the bondman chained by death,
And leaves them to go free.

13 EARTH'S QUAKING IN TIME'S LAST DAY.

When mother earth,
Upbears her children with parturient throes,
In grievous travail through delivery's pain,
From her deep womb again her offspring heaves,
Unto a second birth and life immortal.
Time then itself shall die midst flaming worlds,
Yea those stout walls, the grave's dark house though sealed,
Shall burst asunder with a trumpet's blast.
Ah, in the darkness and the gloom of death,

How all earth's vapid honors fade away!
Then O my soul, time is so wondrous brief,
Perform thy task in haste before life fails.
The drudgery of earth will soon be o'er,
The Master recompense the dues of toil,
With wages equal to the labor done.

14 THIS WORLD UNLIKE THE FUTURE.

From altars in our hearts the sacred flame,
Of pure devotion circling will ascend,
Through heaven's clear ether to its starlit dome.
Certain we are that such a world concealed,
Lies hidden from our ken; for God's own word,
Reveals this truth to man in clearer type,
Than birthday stars portray his horologue.
Then build no marble palace here, O Man,
But spread thy mobile tent upon the plain,
For thou must fold it up and vanish soon.
Think of that land where wars and crime shall cease,
And no more blood be shed; no tears shall fall,
No pall, no bier, no darkness and no grave;
No sickness grieve, no death appall, no heart
With sorrow swell; where all is joy.
No evil thing shall scale heaven's dizzy walls.

15 THE FUTURE WORLD UNPARALLELED.

At evening said the spirit's voice to man,
"Exchange this hospice for elysium;

Thy work is done; go home and get thy hire.
Then comes the balm of sleep, a long calm rest,
The soul's sweet peace. After last honors paid,
Man needs no further gift from human hands;
This world's too cheap to form his cenotaph.
There is a world where ocean tides swell not,
Nor flow nor ebb to hold some pinnace neaped,—
A world where moons shall neither wax nor wane.
Beyond the cloudy pillar and the veil,
Lie stretching far away the verdant hills,
Those heights no eye of mortal can discern,
No ear can catch the charming melody.

16 CHARITY.

There is a sphere in radiant glory cast,
That yields no echo to a human sigh;
Cities there are which rest in jasper walls,
Where strife and envy stir no bitterness.
Hobbling as Autumn comes with shuffling gait,
To pile her hoard in Winter's empty lap;
So Charity, friend of the helpless poor,
Bestows the richness of life's benison,
Where misery and hunger crave our alms.
The scented smoke of burning holocaust,
Smells not so sweet to Heaven as perfume borne,
In clouds of incense to the gates on high,
From sacrificial altars where some soul,

Has poured his offering of grateful praise,
For charity's bequest to sorrow's child.

17

Crook not thy knee, O Man, with flattery's grace,
Nor courtesy at the beck of pompous pride;
But see how bold and ugly is the cheek
Of painted Vice whose form half draped in folds,
Of gossamer which spiders idly weave,
Displays immodest charms. Her pleasures are
As unsubstantial as the castle-gates,
Which poets build on heights of Helicon,
As flimsy and fantastical as dreams,
Or pictured shadows on dim landscapes drawn.
Where strife and envy stir no bitterness,
More beautiful than earth's Arcadian plains,
Will be those valleys all bedecked with flowers.
There built of gold our fair palladium stands,
'Tis than Corinthian temples richer far.
No Samson Agonistes owns the strength,
To wrest those pillars from their rocky base,
Nor can Ulysses bear our treasure off.

18 SATAN AND ADAM'S FALL.

There is a bourne where all good spirits meet.
By friction with the troubles in this world,
The soul gets bruises surgeons cannot heal.
Search for the soothing balm through every clime;—

Man finds no help; alas! aid dwells not there,
Nor elsewhere on the hither side of heaven.
Satan, his form of vantage quick pursued,
When from the heights of glory, down he fell;
Since his remorseless tale of want and woe,
Drew to his side the legions of God's foe.
This prelude to the shock of Adam's fall,
Portends the drama of life's tragedy,
So quaintly ended with death's mystery.

19 LOVE AND THE HONEYMOON.

The cock, with his shrill voice salutes the morn,
And wakes the drowsy sleeper to his toil,
Forth goes the farmer with his jade and plough,
To tend the tillage of his fruitful land.
While shepherds guide their flocks to pastures green,
And herdsmen chase their cattle through the moors.
'Tis busy life indeed where spindles hum,
And through the warp fly shuttles in the loom.
The ploughman whistles while he sows his grain,
The housewife twirls her distaff while she sings.
The gallant swain at sunset tripping home,
Hies him away to winsome bowers of love,
Where modest maiden greets him with that smile,
While blushing speaks its welcome to the heart.

20 THE NUPTIAL HOUR.

Since blue betokens constancy in love,
He needs must twine her auburn hair with wreaths,

Of wild forgetmenots, his honor's pledge.
While bees are swarming in their sunny hives,
'Tis fitting time for man to woo and wed,
To gather dew-drops from Love's honeyed lips,
And sip the rose which blossoms on her cheek.
The wine flows freely at the wedding feast,
While jovial guests partake the festive cheer,
And all goes merry as the summer's day.
The marriage bells are ringing in the tower;
Joy with her music rules the wedding hour.

21 DOMESTIC BLISS THAT SCORNS THE WINE CUP.

When through the day life's cup of pleasure flows,
Winebibbling priests that with their fuddled brain,
Teach morals to fair youth in tipsy mood,
Or drain the punch-bowl sipping with their straw,
Find far less pleasure than the swain in love.
Filled to the brim with much of earth's content,
'Tis sweeter still for crowning wedded bliss,
That offspring issue from the marriage bond,
To cheer man's heart with hopes in sadder years.
Love is a constant banquet where the poor,
As well as rich may feast and satisfy,
Though never surfeit, satiate or pall,
Their monstrous appetite; the more they eat,
The more they want, and hunger for this feast.

No fragrant wine from vintage of the Rhine,
Nor nectar from the spicy Indian isles,
No viand brought from Java or Cathay,
Tastes half so sweet as love which never cloys,
Nor fuddles the deep core of sober sense,
Like liquor flowing from the drunkard's bowl,
But cheers with ecstacy of fervid joy.
The forester who gained his rights from kings,
By ancient law, held title less secure,
Than is love's claim to virtue's noble gifts.

22 THE BANEFUL MARA OF UNREST.

Down in the shelter of some cool retreat,
Beneath the elbows of the crooked oak,
Love joys to dwell where youth to joy links arm,
And drinks a health to pleasure as his bride.
While hand in hand they dance the piper's reel,
That life curtails by whirling off the years,
When Clotho's distaff twirls her magic wheel.
In wild and wanton playfulness, the wind
Tosses the rocks like bubbles of thin air,
Or gay and sportive toys of childhood's hour.
Babel of idleness, thy tower of strength,
Beaten by storms that batter 'gainst its walls,
Shall totter to her fall by tempest's rage.
Winds blow its turrets to earth's quartered heavens,
As bellows toss the embers with their blast.

23 THE RAGING PASSIONS.

Rent with the passion of some earthly feud,
Blind to her fate the dauntless soul lists not,
In shredded livery to wear Heaven's guise.
Fain would each heart its worldly burden bear,
Though deep the furrows of corroding care,
Lie nestling in the wan and pallid cheek.
The curse which falls from lips immaculate,
Upon man's ear in apprehensive dread,
Will rouse his dormant energies of life,
To frantic efforts at heroic deeds.
Wild is the tumult in the heaving breast,
When passion joins where tragic thoughts conspire,
While hate or envy with a fury's lash,
Drives its mad victim to destruction's goal.
The battle of the elements within,
Destroys the ordeal of each warlike soul,
From torch of spirit's fire acquitted free.

24 THE GRAND VISION OF SOULS ASCENDING.

But from the eye new flames of phrenzy burst,
Enkindled there by sparks of smouldering rage.
Jehovah's word uttered from Sinai's top,
With thunder's voice and lurid lightning's tongue,
Affrights man less than those deep undertones,
Which conscience whispers to his inward ear.

How tremulous are mutterings which guide,
Through virtue's pathway to heaven's narrow gate!
That pain of soul which men call sorrow's pang,
Unlike the wound which bleeds from mortal flesh,
Heals not by touch of Hermes' alchemy.
When falters hope upon the awful brink,
Of that dark stream once traversed by each soul,
Which comes not back again, what spirit lives,
That can inspire the courage or supply
The strength to ford the river we call death?
O could these mortal eyes with clouded sight,
Behold the vision of ascending souls,
When they expand their wings for upward flight,
Borne on the cloud of angel companies,
Through heaven's ethereal realms beyond the stars.
We'd feel no doubt the rapture of delight,
In view of august scenes in heights sublime;
After all this how small these worlds appear!
And earthly sorrows dwindle into nought,
Or insignificant and petty mites.

25 MAN'S TERRESTRIAL MONARCHY ABRIDGED.

This goodly world with earth's vast wealth is ours,
Ours are its grassy hills and sunlit skies,
And ours at night the star-bespangled heavens.
As o'er his realm each potentate presides,
Man sways his sceptre with a royal grace,

He strides the waves upon the flood of glory,
And wears his crown in fashion of a king,
While this proud sovereign rules in equity.
And loyal nations own allegiance due,
What power shall hurl man from life's citadel,
What law depose him from his rightful throne?
None but the world's prince, that dread conqueror,
Whose name is Death. This incubus with fright
Conspires to add fell terror to the night.
With quivers of barbed arrows crowded full,
And shoulders bared on hostile raid intent,
He gropes like blear-eyed Melancholy's ghost.
Beneath the arches of this pillared dome,
No other shaft was e'er so truly aimed,
And when he draws his long stretched bowstring back,
Lets fly his dart with more than Switzer's skill.
He strikes his victim down and stoutly proves
Death's fatal archery.
Behold how like a flash time's shuttle flies,
With Brittle thread it mingles warp and woof,
How soon it weaves the tangled skein of fate,
Into life's robe of flimsy gossamer.
Time will not soon from memory efface,
The shifting scenes of this rude buffeting,
Until the curtain falls upon the stage,
When life's sad drama hastens to its close.

26 CHASING AFTER PHANTOMS.

Any child
Views with delight the Champaign's clear mirage
While eagerly he hastens to the scene
Its beauty to enjoy when lo! it fades
And disappoints his hope like Sodom's fruit
Which turns to ashes in his hand that grasped it
So doth earth's pleasure vanish; every joy
Thus quickly fades, and leaves each mind bereft
Man's soul with each lunation of the moon
Waxes and wanes within the zodiac
Till its meconic cycle grows complete.
Mix ye the poison in a murrhine cup
Which crumbles ere one drinks the muscadel
Proud as a murza of the Tartar race
Whose kindest word is cruelty to man
Whose love is hatred reeking with revenge
He frights my panting heart; while I still watch
The wandering peri through the woodland stray
Palls on mine eyes and on my wearied ear
And all my senses; so must I be deemed
Unfortunate as Belisarius,
Who after all his conquests begged his bread
Within the city's gates; so must I mine
To give my p' t the semblance of disgrace.

27 IVAN.

There is the son of Ivan who is called
Blind bard of Argos; while he sings his lay,

His song falls on the ear like that soft tone,
Which echoes from the woodland on the hills,
When tolls the curfew bell at eventide.
The legend tells not whether beast or bird,
Was charmed while listening to th' enchanting strain;
But elves that wandered on the dark grey moor,
Stood spellbound on the spot when Ivan sang.
The scene of ancient story he rehearsed,
Was on the border of Black Forest laid,
Where Vikings stored their wealth within its caves,
The dragon stationed at the cavern's mouth,
To guard its entrance from approach of thieves,
Lay there outstretched and basking in the sun,
While Ivan watched him from the forest hill.
There is the sea-king's coffer which lies hid,
Within the secret nook of that deep cave;
Many a silver thaler stored away
In this strong casket of the noble thane,
Tempted the avarice of robbers, thieves,
And pirates, who displayed their gallant skill
And prowess in attempts to gain access
To this fair prize.

28 LEGEND OF VLADIMIR.

The king named Vladimir renowned in war,
Once brought his daughter to this wood,
Much less to spite her suitors at his court,
Than thus to test the fervor of her love.

Disguised as huntsman he pursued the chase,
While Winifred upon black palfrey mounted
Rides by his side. The huntsman's horn full loud,
Wakens the echoes from the distant hills,
While deep-mouthed hounds, keen to the scented trail,
Barking and baying hotly chase their game.
Swift as a bird the frightened roebuck flies,
O'er forest hill, beneath the clear blue skies;
More fleet than he the royal retimee,
With dog and charger their mad chase pursue.
Hear them as through mid-air they shout, holla!
Onward they run by many a bushy dell,
Through crooked paths along the mountain crag;
With clatter of their hoofs the wildwood rings,
At length the firelock blazes with a flash;
The buckshots fly but barely graze the flesh.
Up starts the roebuck pricking high his ears,
And leaps beyond the sight at one mad bound,
To reach the awful precipice below.
What power shall hold the panting coursers back,
From plunging down that chasm to certain death?
Heaven save them from such dread fatality.
Far had they wandered through this kirtled wood,
When suddenly they halted on the brink
Of danger checked like hotspurs in rash haste,
As though by quick surprisal they were hocked.
One step now saved them all from endless night.
That instant when the hunters felt the shock,

Their sense was startled by an amorous song,
It was the voice of Ivan from the hoult,
Whence he surveyed disasters of the chase.

29 SONG.

By Ivan.

How sweet the tone of mellow horn,
That floats across the deep, blue sea;
The crow of cock in early morn,
The song of maid so dear to me.
How pretty is the lily's flower,
That o'er the brooklet's border peeks,
And richer than the princess' dower,
The buds that blossom on her cheeks.
As oft I watch the pigeon's cote,
Where plights his troth, the cooing dove;
I'll stake ten guineas to each groat,
Upon the warmth of woman's love.

30 WINIFRED TO VLADIMIR.

What sounds are these which strike my ravished ear?
What tones that creep along each quivering nerve,
To reach the trembling fibres of my heart?

31 VLADIMIR TO WINIFRED.

'Tis some rude shepherd seeking his stray lambs,
Which wandered from the fold to this green copse.
He sings in token of his joy at last,

In finding his lost pet among these brakes.
Else he's a bandit that infests these wilds,
From 'chilkern hundreds' where his tribe adheres."

32 THE END.

Just then they reached a tall and stately oak,
Which interposed her branches with their shade,
Against the ruffian blazes of the sun.
Hushed were the winds, those billows of the air,
Which rushing in tornado often break
The giant elm that stands like some ship's mast
Upon the hillside.

SONNETS

CHRISTMAS MORNING.

Thronging the earth's dark depths with myriad train
Grey spirit will-o-wisps along the moor,
Flee homeward to their native caverns wild,
While dawn begins to break o'er eastern hills.
Witches alarmed by bright approaching day
In their charmed circle seething cauldrons round,
Extinguish fires which burn the livelong night
And with their books of fate hie them away,
To cells among the crevices of rocks.
Look where the east throws wide her glowing gates
And Eos paints the glories of the morn.
Wake, wake ye shepherds; herald to the world
In Messiannic hymn. The King is born
Rejoice and sing; 'tis nature's holiday.

THE INTERMEDIATE STATE CALLED PURGATORY.

That wayside inn where souls may spend the night
While flying homeward towards the realms of glory
Hades yclept, ten million leagues from hell
Upon the borderland of Paradise,—
The prophet spies it, tranced in visions weird
On the bright shore of Time's celestial isle.
Now sleeps the mouldering clay 'neath mounds of earth
In mausoleums grand or unmarked graves
Where ghosts inhabit. Each dismantled corse
Once held a spirit which inspired with life
This tenement wherein it dwelt on earth
And bade it smile or weep as liked him best;
But death unlocked the prison door which kept
The shackled soul, and set the captive free.

INSCRIPTION FOR A MONUMENT.

Mysterious shadows o'er the dial cast
Where time with wings outspread pursues his flight,
Proclaim that life is hasting to its end.
'Tis long ago since noontide's sun swept by
With torrid heat which parched the limpid sand;
The hour-glass thrice turned round so soon shall void
Its last refilling, when the eve shall bring
The dying embers of Life's wasted day.
In death's dark, gruesome night, the rustic swain
Fain would oft read this plaintive epitaph:
"While this body lies here gently sleeping,
Bid my friends refrain from bitter weeping;
When the angel comes for harvest reaping,
Jesu, take me to thy tender keeping."

EARTH'S RESTLESS WANDERERS.

O'er all this globe, the tide of grief swells high
And men seek refuge from distress by flight.
Barbarian hordes and Arab wanderers,
Wild Indian tribes and colonies of Jews,
The migratory gipsy bands all rove
Across the steppes of vaster continents,
Homeless and sad in search of sweet repose.
Above the waves of life's dark, troubled sea
Spreads Faith's inspiring voice dispelling doubt
To still the soul's unrest and bring us peace.
Within the sky the radiant star of hope
Gives presage of a brighter dawning day:
There'll be a time, there'll be a land wherein
The earth's lost wandering tribes will reach their home.

THE WOUNDED HUNTSMAN.

Beneath the murky clouds of dark grey eve
Bleak in the wintry storm the snow clad moor,
Lies darkling, while the huntsman plods his way
Across the trackless waste, alone and sad.
The ichor of his blood with grumous clots
Spreads as a plague around his wounded flesh
Where poisoned arrows pierced it to the quick.
Full many a morn high mounted on his horse
With tightened rein he pricked her to the chase
And called his pack of hounds which leaped for joy,
But they shall hear his mellow horn no more.
Weary and sinking, faint from loss of blood,
Outstretched upon the icy bank he lies
And swoons: the chilly blast rocks him to sleep.

RESPECT FOR OLD AGE.

America still pines for her lost child
That strays an exile in some foreign land;
The banished virtue of her ancient prime
When sages prized a venerable age.
In days of yore when insolence was rare
Youth's salutation with uncovered head,
Paid homage due to age's hoary locks;
But now the children mock their reverend sires,
With boisterous shouts as wicked Hebrews did;
Quoth they, "Go up thou bald-head" when the bears
That scoured the neighboring wood devoured their prey.
What dreadful doom and punishment is theirs,
Who scorn the law which bids mankind revere
Our aged sires and honor their grey hairs.

THE FORESTER'S SOLILOQUY BY A BANISHED KING.

In these wild haunts, these dreary nooks and shades,
Where each gnarled oak its solemn shadow throws,
I'll find a covert free from this world's care.
Here on this mound beneath this cedar's branch,
I'll set my throne, contented as a King
And swing my sceptre o'er these forest glades,
While each fierce beast shall own my sovereign sway
There will I lie upon that bed of leaves,
More restful to my limbs than couch of down,
When weary from the chase, I reach my home.
Far from vain pomp and idle gossiping,
Secure from flattery, stale wit of courts,
Bombastic pride, civilities of form
Shadows which own naught real, henceforth I'm free.

DOMESTIC HAPPINESS AT CHRISTMAS-TIDE.

Love's broadened sphere creates all men akin.
How dear the bonds which nature sweetly ties
With cords resilient from our kindred blood.
The maid departing from her mother's arms,
Becomes the bride that fits her husband's choice;
Her babes, the olive branches round his board,
Grow up to children who adorn their home.
To them what cheer these little angels bring
Joys of the fire-side prized on Christmas eve,
That play in gathered groups the yew-trees round.
Heaven bends to earth in adoration mild
To witness that men crown her noblest Child,
With royal honors for the health He brings
Which blesseth equal to the wealth of kings.

WOMAN.

Woman is given with angelic heart
To share man's joy and in his sorrow weep.
Between them stretch the cords of sympathy
So strong and tender that they keenly feel,
Love's gentlest touch; but giants can not rend
The plastic web which knits two souls in one.
Sweet eglantine that scents the morning dew,
Clings not so fondly to her wedded briar,
As maiden to her lover's soft embrace.
O tyranny of woman's honeyed love!
She smoothly flatters with her blandest smile;
Her syren song enchants man's ravished ear,
She conquers him with her resistless spell,
So fond her captives are to be her slaves.

THE MANIAC'S SOLILOQUY.

Unmeasured storm, high as the spangled heavens
Far broader than the girdle of the spheres
And twice as deep as the unfathomed sea,—
That quenchless flame which burns within my breast,
How can I calm this agitated frame
When passion like a cyclone sweeps in rage
Through every cord and fibre, till it seems
The very brain grows dizzy with its whirl.
Here in this lonely woodland, I shall dwell
Where hum of bees and cricket's chirp ne'er comes,
But howl of wolverines oft greets mine ear
And pensive owls hoot to the starless night.
It were no slander should men dub me mad
Since wit and I indeed stand at strange odds.

FRIENDSHIP.

A transient friendship binds us with a cord
Which may be snapped without a single pang;
But when a long tried, constant friend departs
With frowns upon that face once wreathed with smiles,
His anger hath an edge which wounds the soul
And cuts such gashes through our inmost heart,
As anodynes can neither soothe nor heal.
Friendship I prize, when bursts the angry cloud
On my unsheltered head, beyond the price
Of rubies or of gold or diamond crowns.
Glory and wealth, vain pleasure and applause
Weigh nothing in the balance 'gainst true love.
Of all the gifts which Heaven can bestow,
Naught else is equal to a trusty friend.

ELIJAH'S TRANSLATION.

The footprints in the desert sands of earth
Had grown too deep for human reckoning.
Stretched with tremendous force, the vital cord
Had snapped asunder with life's dreadful strain.
Upon the crest of yonder neighboring hills,
Deep clouds were gathering to bear away,
The spirit of Elijah on the wings
O' the mighty whirlwind; borne along the sky
In chariots of fire, the sage and prophet
With eyes turned downward, fixed his steady gaze
In pity on the erring world below.
"Alas" he said, "Men heed no prophet's voice
Shiloh the root from Jesse's stem shall come
Behold to Him the nations shall give ear."

THE JUDGMENT OF THE LAST GREAT DAY.

When God shall call his stewards to the bar
For their accounting, thrones of judgment set;
The book is opened like a frightful scroll
Midst flaming worlds and crash of torrid spheres.
Though Mercy still stands pleading for your life,
Quaking will come too late. The righteous shine,
Like stars in heaven's clear vaulted firmament
Whose sparkling gems light up the etherial dome.
The universe seems rocking in the depths
Of ancient chaos; angels, saints and men
Stand listening aghast with outstretched ear
And breathless eagerness to hear the voice,
Which speaks the destiny of human souls
And seals the doom of man through endless years.

CLARISSA.

How many a gay Lothair kneels at the shrine
Where pale Clarissa with impassioned voice,
Thrills his rapt heart with her bewitching lay.
What fires conflagrative of youthful blood
Are kindled by the flaming torch of love.
This darling passion which men fondle most,
Inciting wars and feuds and tragedies,
Hath stained the annals of a bygone age,
With floods of human gore. Each trustful maid
Unto her swain betrothed, beset with snares
And pitfalls lightly treads life's thorny path,
Until her wedded bliss grows ripe with years;
While she descends the hill close by his side
To sleep together with him at its base.

HOW SWEET IS LOVE.

As fair a bird as ever fowler snared,
Still wings her flight through waves of summer air.
Some beauteous maid waits for each comely swain
To pledge his loyal troth in wedded love.
She sings the livelong day with birds in groves,
As frolicksome as Eve midst Eden's bowers.
Her lips like cherry blossoms or the rose,
Moist with the dew that scents the azure morn,
Breathe perfumes sweet as Araby the blest.
Her eyes twin sisters to the orb of day,
Beam in his light, like evening stars which fling
Their soft clear radiance o'er the dreaming world;
A rival to the nightingale, her song
Teaches rude hearts how precious 'tis to love.

MAN'S DEPENDANCE ON REASON.

Man's bankrupt wit oft like a beggar pleads
For treasures adequate to line his purse
Lest he may play a simple Simon's part
He needs full share of reason, wisdom, wit
Which like the compass and the Northern star
Must be his guides across the trackless waste
Of life's wild sea. Well may each heart exclaim
How blest the guidance which by reason given
Directs our wayward feet through crooked paths
Or drops us gently down with painless fall!
And what more sorry sight can one behold
Than people driven mad by furious fates
Within whose clouded mind remains no trace
Of clear intelligence,—life's flame is quenched.

RESPECT FOR WOMEN.

Insult a woman! He must be a brute
For he's no man; since woman's form was shaped
To be respected and beloved by all
Never abused with contumelious shame:
Her character for good repute forbids
One tainted touch which mars or sullies her.
Why else was she made chaste and beautiful?
The tender titles, mother, sister, wife
Which we bestow on woman makes us dread
To wound the feelings of a friend so dear:
To cast aspersions and to bandy words
By which we break a woman's heart is base;
Weeping a thousand years both day and night
Could not atone for an offence so foul.

UPON THE SEA.

The sea-dog barks and frightened larks
Take wing and fly away;
So full-rigged ships on their hazard trips
Sail o'er the wind-swept bay.
'Neath the lowering sky the seamen cry
Their hearts aglow with joy
Through many a wail to ships a-sail
They shout their glad ahoy.
The cloud-capped sea grows dear to me
While heroes mount the wave
They brave the wind midst storms unkind
To reach an ocean grave;
The trump shall wake the dreamers to be free
Once more to hear the requiem of the sea.

DESTINY.

Three score and ten, the number of our years
Seems but the shadow of an idle dream,
A vehicle that floats on life's rude waves,
Abreast the surging billows of the tide.
O'er cloud-capped heights where Jesus guides them on
Embattled hosts pursue their giddy flight;
Above the seething cauldron of the deep
The pathway leads, where Faith and Triumph meet.
The prodigal with penitential prayers.
Which knock so gently at the gates on high,
Will gain sure entrance to Heaven's splendid towers.
The lamp of life is quenched; man's glory fades;
There is a time, also a land wherein
Earth's lost and wandering tribes reach their glad home.

THE LAST OF WANNALANSET.

The aged sire with locks of hoary grey
Bleached with the frost of ninety winters gone
Enfeebled by bold time's unsparing hand
Draws near the evening of life's tiresome day
Beneath his beetling brow peer eyes of love
Which pierce through realms of yonder starlit space.
His foot stands fixed upon the shore of time;
His spirit spans the border of that sea
Whose billows curl beneath the whirlwind's rage;
Soon will he step across the shadowed verge
Soon sink to slumber in the dreamless world
Let each immortal spirit breathe this prayer
When in the peaceful hunting ground he lies
Sweet be his rest till Heaven shall bid him rise.

DEATH.

The wretched swear before the Lord Most High
In this cold heartless world they will not dwell
From Hades' realm their high-wrought oaths outcry
Maxims accursed from denizens of hell.
In every human life there comes a time
Which rings the knell of all our buried hopes
Which plays the music of a hymn sublime
Above the mound of earthly horoscopes.
Death, like the shadow of a passing cloud,
Or the approach of evening's dusky hue,
Or deep as darkness underneath the shroud
Of blackest midnight, hides life's day perdue.
When shall we mortals welcome to our hearths and homes
This savage monster's call while o'er this globe he roams.

THE CITY OF GOD.

Methinks I see on yonder shining hills
The gilded spires, the archways and the gates
The watchmen on the towers beside the rills
Where conclaves join celestial potentates.
Eternal city where the chariot wheels
Of Angelus on golden pavements roll,
How grateful to the sense each wavelet feels
When floods of glory wrap the blissful soul!
Jerusalem, the city of our King
How splendid are her walls which fain enfold
The crevices where purple clusters cling
To palaces of ivory and gold.
The fertile oasis upon earth's arid plain
Hath not the matchless beauty of heaven's fair domain.

THE MERRIMAC RIVER.

I

Rushing and twirling o'er his rocky bed
The Merrimac hastes on his seaward way,
Where Indian canoes once proudly sped
While alewives swam in Wannalanset's day,
Not thine fair river is Niagara's roar
Nor thine the ruffian breakers wild and free
But calm as wavelets on the Phrygian shore
Thy current runs to greet the wind-swept sea
Thy banks as delved by mighty monarch's hand
In forms of beauty which will never fade
Upon the limpid stream by Heaven's command
In pictured outlines cast their dreamy shade
How cheering to the heart as friends to nature show
Thy joyous gleeful waters dancing as they flow.

II

How like a dream seems now that youthful time
When sports with angling craft there never failed
While on the brink we played in boyhood's prime
Our argosies abreast thy current sailed.
To serve our industries in sportive mood

Thy sluice diverted through its channeled ground
Beneath yon culvert steals, by wantons wooed
Leaps with mad pranks to turn each mill-wheel round
Swift as the reindeer in primeval wild
Runs thy dark stream across Pawtucket's verge
Festive and gay like nature's forest child
Onward thou speed'st to kiss Atlantic's surge
Ye floods of springtime swollen with the snow and rain
Bright are your waters while ye mingle with the main.

LOVE IN WEDLOCK.

The mystic stream which life imparts
Inspiring hopes to realms above
The sweetest tie which binds our hearts
In golden cords is woman's love
Our duteous vows in honor paid
At Hymen's altar hand in hand
Though beauty from our cheek may fade
Shall ever still unbroken stand
Fill up each beaker to the brim
Sing out your festive virelay
The joys of wedlock gaily hymn
The honeymoon will last for aye.
Behold the twain is one; in honest pride
We welcome to our home the groom and bride.

INCENSE AND PRAYER.

Piling on Hecate's altar sacred gifts
That Heaven may be appeased, the aged priest
The sacrificial incense burns in awe
While from his censor fragrant perfumes rise
To fill the peaceful air with smoke of thyme,
So let the incense of our prayers ascend
From altars where our hearts pour out their streams
In sweet oblations to the God of Love.
The cloud of vapor in earth's atmosphere
Rolls up on high like penitential prayer.
The scent of blood which stains the sacrifice
Can not atone for sins of guilty men,
Nor Heaven's favor win, without the aid
Of suppliant devotion.

ADMIRAL DEWEY.

The sun at the zenith when cloudless he shines
Bestowing his splendor on valleys and hills
While nations behold his rare beauty which fills
The earth full of wonder which strangely combines
With man's admiration for nature's designs
Portrayed on the landscape in meadows and rills
But Manilla's great chieftain, who nobly fulfills
The task of the conqueror adroitly aligns
His battleships confronting the brave Spanish fleet
Controlling his forces with disciplined sway
In triumph to compass the Spaniards defeat.
With burning and sinking of all their array
Resplendent in glory the hero complete
Outrivals in splendor the king of the day.

THE CURFEW.

Hark with what rapture curfew tolls the knell
Of dying day. Night gallops on apace
The swallows homeward to their nests now fly
The panther hies unto his lair, and man
Begrimed with sweat and dust from toil and care
Repairs to hut or hovel to repose.
The curse of Adam's sin still bans our race
Amidst the tumult of the throng we hear
But faintly sad complaints and wailings sore
Which knock at heaven's gate to gain redress
While many mutely suffer like dumb beasts
Which know no judge to whom they may appeal
For justice to avenge their hopeless cause.

THE WOODBINE WREATHS.

When Dewey, Samson, Schley and Shafter fought
And sunk the gunboats blazing through the sea
The world applauding praised the deeds they wrought
While patriots claimed that Cuba must be free.
Cervera, Blanco and Toral, their peers
The champions of Spain's false, groundless hope
For pluck and bravery demand our cheers
Of challenged foes on Santiago's slope.
The ancient monarchy beyond the flood
Whose strength the young republic dares engage.
Will prove on field of battle stained with blood
How virile youth contends with senile age
The firm knit sinews of the brave and free
Shall break and conquer dupes of tyranny.

SAFETY IN THE STORM.

When the waves in restless motion
Dash against my vessel's spar
Tell me not on life's rough ocean
Heaven can show no guiding star.
When the billows o'er me rolling
Swell above man's weak control
Comes this voice with words consoling
"God will save the imperilled soul."
When fond faith begins to weaken
When sweet hope can cheer no more
To mine eyes behold Heaven's beacon
Stars that light up yonder shore;
Fixed and constant points the needle to the pole
Guiding seamen to the haven of the soul.

AN EXTRAVAGANZA, OR A LUNATIC'S SONG.

Hear the music of nature the song of the birds
Midst the echoes of battle in lands of the boor
Where the cyclone of thought mid the whirlwind of words
Seems like Eolus panting for breath on the moor
Let my vessel drift onward pursued by the breeze
In the trail of the winds from Columb to Cathay
Heaven permit that my bark overwhelmed by the seas
May escape the rude wreck in the wilds of dismay,
Hear the prayers of the seamen ye powers of the deep
While King Neptune with trident rules the billows enraged
When the whirl of the Maelstrom shall rock men to sleep;
May the hunger of ocean be wholly assuaged;
When our heroes sink down to a watery grave,
Mermaids dance in the light of the moon on the wave.

SOLDIERS AWAKENED FROM SLEEP.

Upon the shore of lost Atlantis cast
We hear the bugle note which calls to rest
The sounds of tattoo warn us of the night
While lights burn dimly in each chamber hall;
Extinguished camp-fires tell us day is gone,
When soldiers fall asleep in tent and field
Beneath the sombre shade entranced in dreams
They spend the livelong hours of death's dark night
But lo! the morning breaks and through the air
Resounds the reveillé which strangles sleep
And forth from slumbering areas stalk the ghosts
Now more alive than when their birthday's prime
Opened their eyes to earth's benignant light
To gaze in wonder on life's tragic scenes.

THE HELP OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE.

Just as the sunshine melts cold frost and snow
To Faith's dear child God's grace and comfort flowing
Dispel the clouds and darkness of life's storm
His favor fashions so this earthly mould
As best to mitigate those untold ills
From which men else would suffer agony.
In this brief dream of years which men call life
How many a pleasure and delight we feel
Through Heaven's kind care to clear our path of thorns
The signal benefits which flow in streams
From fountains of enduring love on high
Can be excelled in measure and degree
Only when Providence with foresight gains
Advantage sought by thwarting Satan's guile.

OLD AGE.

Man's age should not be reckoned by the scores
Of years which he has spent in idleness
In wanton negligence of duties owed;
But by the deeds he has accomplished well,—
Not by the number of grey hairs which shed
Their lustre on his honored hoary head
Nor by deep lines ploughed in his cheek by cares
But by the noble character he bears,
Then will old age sit on his comely brow
Adorning him more nicely than rich crowns
Worn on the head of kings, Lads doff their caps,
Girls vie in dropping curtsies at his feet
And knights in armor cheered by multitudes
To him in stately reverence halt to bow.

SUNSHINE AFTER STORM.

Few men have so much erethism that they
May wrap its mantle round them in their dreams.
'Tis not the real, but the ideal in life
From which men suffer by such thrusts
As oft to wound them to the quick or kill
We gather ripe fruit never till we mourn
For faded blossoms dropped in early spring.
'Tis not the constant blaze of noonday suns
Which gives us most delight in scenes of earth,
But when we view the rainbow after showers
We cull the choicest of our garden flowers;
So when our sobs are hushed and tears are dried
While still the dews of sorrow wet our cheeks
We reap the sweetest fruits of human joy.

THE TEMPLE OF HUMAN CHARACTER.

The skillful architect who builds his fame
Of fortune guided by the plan devised,
May boast of honors or of wealth more vast
Than such a builder gains as can construct
A grand cathedral crowned with lofty dome.
But he who frames a noble character
Surpasses both in what adorns a man;
'Tis not so much the gaudy trimmings worn
By blushing maids which should insure true pride,
But rather modest virtue's simple guise
Which clothes them in a beauty all its own.
Glory is founded on a deeper base
Than those large stones whereon high temples rest,
For worth dwells in the centre of the soul.

CHRIST ABOVE THE DARKNESS AND THE STORM.

Upon the sea beside each bounding wave
Which dances to the music of the spheres
God plants his footsteps in heaven's ruffian blast.
Rave on, mad billows, while your crested foam
Laves still the cordage of the topmost sail,
So doth the passion of this throbbing breast
O'ertop all bounds and confines, till its heat
Hath shamed the noontide with its scorching rays.
The star which lights the mariner's dark way
Lends heaven's sweet beauty to the sea's rude waves
Christ like a beacon on the snow-clad hill
Which cheers the wildwood where lost wanderers stray
Still guides the traveller across the waste
Of this earth's wilderness to worlds of light.

THE LAST DAY'S CRASH OF WORLDS.

How bright this earth was in her pristine morn
But man by sin hath marred her smiling face.
Now wrathful seas lash her storm-beaten shores
Since angels sealed her dark destructive doom.
When trumps proclaim that time shall be no more
The torch which lights will kindle this world's hills
Then rending caves and crumbling palaces
Where kings and tyrants used to reign supreme
Black as the smouldering brands of Erebus
Shall heap the swarthy ruin in their fall
Heaven's splendid dome bedecked with stars shall fade
The darkness of a dreadful night shall brood
Above the waste and earth's grand crash with peals
Astonish powers and break the welkin's top.

THE LAND OF FORGETFULNESS OR DREAMS.

My friend shall be remembered when he dwells
In that lone bourn where sorrows are forgot
I wonder where the human spirit rests
Within what nook or cavern fast asleep
Waking or dreaming each one seeks repose
Some subtle and etherial cloud may wrap
Their forms in cloaks whose mantling forms conceal
The spectre from man's view. Tell me ye ghosts
If tidings from your realm can ever reach
The ear of mortals. What do ye possess
That side the river, cheering to the heart.
Which once was sad? Back from the spirit land
Like echoes from the hills comes this response.
"Dare not profane these shades with mortal's quest".

A FRIEND INDEED.

Once I possessed a tender loving friend,
Whose heart stood open wide to sympathy,
Whose cheerful words would often force a smile,
Whose tear begat a tear. My tale of woe
Would wet his eyes with floods till down each cheek
The streamlet flowed, drop chasing drop so fast,
His heart with pity melted, and he swooned.
He to the wretched consolation gave
Health to the sick, and comfort to the sad.
Some ingrates met him on his thorny path
And with the thorns they platted him a crown;
These he forgave, and blessed them with his smile
His name was Jesus; nailprints in his hands
Proclaim him to the world your friend and mine.

THE CORPSE.

What incoherent fabric built of dreams
By dint can compass within ghastly walls
Death's trophies garnished with the wealth of Ind?
The ruby lips once curled with flow of wit
Now bleached snow-white and frosted all too soon
Grow silent when they lose their honeyed kiss
Those eyes which sparkled when they saw a friend
And brightly glistened with each greeting given
Lie hid 'neath folded curtains through the night
The face which beamed with smiles, looks frigid, stern,
Seems grimly darkened with earth's sombre shade.
Those features shapeless with Sardonic grin,
Stark body pallid, motionless and cold,
Make nature shudder at this ghastly sight.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S TYPE OF CHARACTER.

All praise to noble men of humble birth
Who rose from poverty or servitude
To stations of commanding eminence
Through energetic toil and force of will,
Who triumphed not by prestige of descent
But by that force of mind which sways the world;
As Lincoln peered above compatriots,
And climbed fame's ladder to its topmost round
Such brilliant honor doth their courage gain
While floating onward o'er the sea of glory
That one may willingly e'en dare to fall
To serve his country for less recompense
Bravely to share their perils we will march;
Gladly we'll suffer like them though we die.

LIFE'S BURIED BURDENS.

Let us each our burdens bearing
Toil to reach the mountain top
Then descend, our laurels wearing,
Till our heavy burdens drop
What is life but earnest sighing
Burdened with the debts we owe?
What its end, the pangs of dying
When we sleep in vales below?
There is joy and there is laughter
Pleasures of this merry earth
Presage of a bright hereafter
Heritage of noble birth.
What can ever prove souls dafter
Than in dust to trail their worth?

DEATH OR DISGRACE, WHICH SHALL IT BE?

Worse than that loss, when life's extinguished spark
Snapped from the brand, in smouldering embers drops,
Is life's dishonor which consigns to shame
Earth's proud, ambitious aspirant for fame.
The soldier quakes not at the cannon's mouth
For love of earthly glory leads him on;
And this is brave. The wretched suicide
Shuns not disgrace although he faces death
But robs himself of life which none can give
But God alone who rightly takes or spares.
Hero in life's grand battle do thy best
Let come what will, earth's honors to deserve;
Lay bare thy breast to pungent sorrow's wound
When slander's poisoned arrows smite thy heart.

HOW WOMAN'S WOOED AND WON.

Woman yields no consent to argument
In what concerns the heart, where love alone
Stands umpire to decide; nor is she moved
By human eloquence although man's plea
Be armed with logic to persuade the world
Untutored lovers flatter and cajole
While each coy maiden calmly bids them wait
The courtier cries in vain with labored art:
"Thou art my Venus midst these brilliant stars,
Suppress that sidelong look so shy and coy,
And greet thy lover with one cheery smile!"
The simple swain composed of sighs and tears
Who scarce can speak aright love's stammering phrase
With pleading eyes wins Mary's hand and heart.

BRIDAL ADORNMENT AND CORONATION.

Where can we find to parallel the maid
In beauty's rivals, lily and the rose,
Entrancing charms so rare, that capture man
When lips, and cheeks and eyes seem bright as flame
Enkindled by the glowing sparks of love?
Go where the light of florid Venus shines
The bride of chaste Adonis in his bower;
See figured beauty passion-born wherein
Kaleidoscopes of changing colors blend.
A triple crown of glory may she wear
The modest maiden of each lover's dream,
With virtue's purity to sweetness joined,
Beauty's fair form and comely matron's pride,
While unseen spirits bless her marriage ring.

SECURE IN UNFAILING HOPE.

This sunlit dome which spans the arch of heaven
Buttressed with lofty hills, bespangled belts
With far resounding crash of orbs will fall
Sooner than God will crush life's cherished hopes.
The fabric of the world is not more firm
Than is his changeless word, when from His throne
Imperial edicts dart, evasions fail;
Magician's skill or casuistic arts
Or subtle wit and logic change Him not
There's not a child upon this planet born
However lowly his sad lot may be
But gladly he may trust our Father's care.
Would that my might could serve him as I ought,—
Meagre return for Heaven's kind gifts to me.

OUR REFUGE IN DISTRESS.

Where shall we go when these poor hearts feel sore
Midst circling eddies of the world's repulse
When our last hope has vanished, and the grief
Has drained the eyelid's font of its last tear?
When Fate's black clouds o'erspread the angry sky
And cast their dismal pall athwart the earth
We drink the bitter wormwood mixed with gall
And find our trusted friends transformed to foes
Oh, whither shall we flee from man's stern wrath
To hide our forms within the cleft of rocks
Where hell's fierce thunderbolt may spend its force?
Let us escape to where the pillowed head
In the arms of mercy, tenderness and love
Rests calmly on the bosom of our God.

THE FIRST DAY OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.

Remember that through lapse of centuries
By their unfolding when time's pregnant womb
Gives birth to New Year's eve, we turn big leaves
In life's fair book to scrutinize each scroll
Lo stamped indellibly past pages swarm
With records which can never be effaced
But future leaves are blank where men may write
Each line with splendid quills rich ornament
To suit the merit of their deeds.
So let us pen our own life's diary
With golden letters to outshine the sun
While speeds the dizzy whirl of life's fleet years,
Christs blood-stained cross blots from the page of guilt
Our cancelled debts with ledgered balance due.

GOD IN THE AGES.

There's one Inhabitant in million worlds
Who stands unmoved while countless centuries
March with majestic tread along the path
Of time's unfolding verge. The years roll on
But He remains the same forever calm,
Serene and tranquil as his own blue heavens.
Past, present, future years, He heeds them not.
The ages are but moments in His sight
And yesterday, today, tomorrow blend
In one eternal now. Two thousand years
Man's genius struggled on ere he could reach
The climax of known art from depths profound
But subtler science far beyond man's grasp
God kenned before earth's centuries began.

EXUBERANT FANCY.

Sweet Fancy builds her palace in the night
When spectres move along the silent shades
Where bodies lie entombed. She spins her thread
And weaves her web from filaments of thought
As unsubstantial as a maiden's dream
Pictures life-like adorn her chamber wall
Figures of oriental shape, all draped
In gaudy or fantastic garb, and trimmed
With mottled grey. Beams of the gibbous moon
Cast their faint glimmer through the latticed panes
While spirits stalk within her corridors.
From rare quaint legends of the olden time
She borrows tales to charm each youth and sire
With mimic drollery or festive mirth.

WOMAN'S POWER.

There's not a soul of man with sense so blunt
That hath not quaked beneath a woman's frown;
There's no man's heart which beats with honest throb
But sometime feels the touch of woman's love.
Her tongue in censure keener than a sword
Can slay her thousands, but her sweetest smile
Revives youth's drooping spirit, and her praise
Swells his deep bosom with a flush of pride
Prostrate on bended knee the hapless swain
Oft craves the honor of his mistress' hand
But dares not hope for legacy so rich;
Mantled with blushes while she speaks his fate
In tones which thrill the fibres of his heart
He at her bidding stands,—a ransomed man.

COURAGE.

Beware, thou craven soul, hares breed no hounds
Who fain would conquer in the world's arena
Must bravely fight till courage gains the prize.
Would you but win a battle or a wife
Tackle the task without one grain of fear.
Prove to the foe that danger lurks
Beneath the clutches of hate's savage hand.
When tyrants threat or hostile legions crush
When adversaries wield their bastinades
Or treacherous bandits mingle drink with gall
Then outraged victims cry: "Vengeance is mine
Unto the world's wild storms O hapless wight
Lay bare thy breast already bronzed and scarred
And from Wrong's towering castle snatch the flag."

LIFE'S EXTINGUISHED FIRE.

Life's lamp goes out; then whither flits the flame?
To God who gave it quickly flies the soul
As swiftly through the body's wound though one
As through a score when gashed by hostile swords.
What power to eyes can seal the lids so close
And turn the lips so pale and blanche the cheek?
Can this be sleep? or is it rather death
That cures all care and heals the keenest pain?
Surfeit of life conducts to life's surcease.
This precious treasure hangs upon a thread
Brittle as glass, and vapid as a breath.
What bubbles, toys, we boys play daftly with
Heedless of quicksands and the gulf below
Wherein our tangled feet will plunge so soon.

VICISSITUDES.

The smiling infant in the cradle rocked
  Looks up in gladness at the cheerful dawn,
Nor heeds the cloud hung in the sky to warn,
  The wary, lest his hope be rudely shocked,
By ruthless clashes of the storm unlocked;
  From wind-swept barriers out of tempest born.
Alas, how quickly turns his smile to scorn,
  When streaming from his eyes with tears well stocked,
The showers pour down that face, whose features flocked
  With dimpled laughter when 'twas sunny morn.
Within the compass of one single day,
  Some hours the earth is clouded, some 'tis bright;
Thus o'er man's life, the light and shadows play,
  'Twixt morning brightness and the gloom of night.

TO WASHINGTON.

Hail, Washington, our country's father thou,
Whose patriot zeal once set the nation free.
Above the sons of men, exalted high,
Stand thou on pinnacle of man's proud fame,
Of all that's wise and brave, earth's paragon.

TRUTH VERSUS FALSEHOOD.

Truth like the rock with mighty pillared base
Stands firm against the stormy blasts of time;
While falsehood's crumbling palaces of sand
Though buttressed with the sophistry of knaves
Kissed by the sea are swallowed by its waves.

STREAM OF LIFE.

The stream of life hugs closely to its bank
Where lazily it whiles the time away
To drink refreshing coolness from the shade
Of that tall osier's bough which spans the brink
Beyond the threatening cloud we see no frowns
But rather smiles upon our Father's face
Which lines its blackness with a golden fringe
Earth's harbinger,—Heaven's augury of peace.

AMERICA'S SHIP OF STATE.

Ride on o'er seas, bold chieftain, still ride on
The flag of empire floats o'er isles afar,
Conquer a peace, till hostile hosts grow wan,
Our banner gains one bright majestic star
The sinking ship of state, when nations see,
Haste to the rescue captain, grasp the helm,
Whether she drift to windward or to lee,
Cast anchor where no billows overwhelm,
The nation's throng of people pace the deck,
Watching with anxious fears what fates betide;
The ship's crew man the yards to save from wreck,
And tossed on rolling ocean deftly guide,
Though rough the voyage, kind master with heaven's strength endued
Steer to safe port, and share man's lifelong gratitude.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, February 13, 1901.

Dear Dr. Mansfield:—

I have read the poem with *great admiration* and *pleasure*, and have at once sent it over to the White House, as I am not able to walk so far today.

I am, with best wishes,

Sincerely yours,
JOHN HAY.

Rev. Dr. Francis Mansfield,
Carlisle, Massachusetts.

John Hay, poet, orator and statesman thus gives his hearty approval to Rev. Dr. Mansfield's verses entitled "To the Admiral Commanding The Ship of State, America."

THE TEMPLE ON THE HEIGHTS.

In marble corridors 'neath some high dome,
Swells virgin beauty like the fragrant rose,
'Midst perfumed dewdrops of the summer air,—
In stately mansions where embosomed love
Holds converse meted to each nuptial bower,
On mountain ranges far above the clouds.
There is a temple built on hills so high
That earthly ladders cannot reach its top,
Nor bandits scale its walls to plunder gold.
Grander than any presidential manse,
Or minster on the ocean's rocky brink,
Where mighty kings are crowned in pompous pride,
Is that celestial cloister where each child
Whom God shall call His own will sit enthroned.

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